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INDEX

Economics 1
Orange Economy 1
Framework for Standardising Regulation Formulation & Public Feedback Process 1
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) 1
Gaps in India's Bankruptcy Resolution Process as Flagged by Supreme Court 2
India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI) 2
India Ascends to World's 4th Largest Economy 3
IMF's World Economic Outlook (WEO) 3
Key Highlights of the RBI Annual Report 2024-25 3
Geography And Environment 4
India's First InterState Cheetah Conservation Corridor 4
Biological Diversity (Access and Benefit Sharing) Regulation, 2025 4
Microplastic Infiltration in Oceans 5
Cloud Seeding A potential solution for Air Pollution and Water Scarcity 5
NorthEast India's First Geothermal Well in Dirang 6
Early Onset of SouthWest Monsoon in 2025: Causes, Criteria and Impact of Climate Change 6
Defence 6
OperationSindoor: India's Counterterrorist Offensive 6
Nationwide Civil Defence Mock Drill 7
IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN) 7
Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise INS Sharda in Maldives 8
Operation Keller: The Indian Army's Successful Neutralisation of TRF Chief 8
BhargavastraCounter Drone System:India's MicroMissile Defence Solution 9
Exercise Teesta Prahar by Indian Army 9
IMDEX Asia 2025 and India's Naval Engagement 9
The Induction of INSV Kaundinya by Indian Navy 10
INS Sharda's Maiden Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise in Maldives 10
Tabletop Exercise Quad Countries and the IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN) 11
ExerciseNomadic Elephant 2025 11
Golden Dragon 2025 A Joint Military Exercise by China and Cambodia 11
Polity 12
Overview of Personality Rights in India 12
Reviving Private Members' Bills in India 12
Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules 13
The Chief Justice of India 13
Supreme Court's Advisory Jurisdiction 14
Exploring the Presidential Reference under Article 143 of the Indian Constitution 14
InterServices Organisations Rules 2025: India's Strategic Military Reforms 15
Rank Reports Awards 15
The Pulitzer Prizes 2025 15
"Enhancing Competitiveness of MSMEs in India" Report 16
Detailed Overview of India's Performance in the Human Development Index 2023 16
World Economic Outlook Report 2025 17
The State of the World's Nursing 2025 Report 17
Topic: The 58th Jnanpith Award 2023 18
The Gallantry Awards 2025: Honouring Bravery 18
Heart Lamp Sweeps 2025 International Booker Prize 19
Global Report on Food Crises 2025: Deepening Global Food Insecurity 19
16th Asiatic Lion Census 2025 and its Key Findings 20
WMO Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update 20252029 Overview and Impact 20
National Florence Nightingale Awards 2025 21
World Health schemes And Initiative 21
Organization's First Ever Pandemic Agreement 21
Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) 22
India's First Vistadome Jungle Safari Train 22
Schemes & Initiative 23
Operation Hawk An AntiCybercrime Initiative by CBI 23
Inauguration of Vizhinjam International Seaport by Prime Minister 23
Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Restructured WeatherBased Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) 23
Operation Sankalp 24
The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India (GHCI) 24
AI Enabled Haryana Water Resource Atlas 2025 25
New Digital Platforms Introduced by Department of Posts 25
Sagar Mein Samman Initiative 26
KVIC's Honey Mission and Importance of Beekeeping 26
eZero FIR Initiative in India 26
Science And Tech 27
India's First GenomeEdited Rice Varieties: DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) and Pusa DST Rice 1 27
LICONN(LightMicroscopy Based Connectomics): A new technique for nanoscale brain mapping 27
Asteroid 2024 YR4 28
India's First GeneEdited Sheep: A Step towards Advancements in Genomic Science 28
ICMR's Launch of the First Stigma Scale for Sickle Cell Disease 29
Understanding the PSLVC61/EOS09 Mission 29
Indian Yak Genomics and Its Implication 30
Miscelleneous 30
LIC Establishes Guinness World Record in Insurance Sales 30
Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: Life, Achievements and Contributions 30
World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day 31
Overview of the Dongria Kondh Tribe 31
Ayurveda Day Celebration and Insights 32
Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) 32
The Shirui Lily Festival and its Significance 33
Press Council of India (PCI): An Overview 33

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Lakkundi Group of Monuments Proposed for UNESCO Tentative List 34
Inauguration of India's First 3nm Semiconductor Design Hubs 34
Operation Olivia and Protection of Olive Ridley Turtles 34
Updated Length of India's Coastline 35
Sports 36
Khelo India Youth Games 36
Recent Developments in Cricket 36
Recent Developments in Badminton and Tennis Championships 36
Rise of India's 86th Grandmaster in Chess 37
Archery & Shooting: The Ecstatic Achievement of Kanak Budhwar at the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 37
Recent Achievements and Announcements in World Athletics & Football 38
Recent Developments in Sports Across India and Around the World 38
International Relations 39
IndiaAngola Relations and Overview of Angola 39
IndiaUK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) 39
World Hydrogen Summit 2025 and Green Hydrogen Initiative 40
Meetings And Sumbits 40
The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) 40
Rising North East Investors Summit 2025 41
78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGC) 41
SVAMITVA Scheme & World Bank Land Conference 2025 – Pioneering Initiatives in Land Governance 41
The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF20) 42
Inclusive India Summit: A Leap Towards Empowering Persons with Disabilities 42

ECONOMICS

Orange Economy

Introduction and Explanation

- The Orange Economy, also referred to as the creative economy, encompasses economic phenomena which are derived from culture, art, media, innovation, and intellectual property rights.
- The sectors this economy covers include film, music, design, video games, publishing, the performing arts, advertising, and digital content creation.

Key Features

- The Orange Economy is culturecentric where it leverages a nation's unique heritage, art, and language as its primary drivers.
- It is a talentdriven economy that significantly depends on individual creativity, enhanced and shared through digital mediums.
- The Orange Economy also heavily focuses on intellectual property, generating revenue through copyrights, trademarks, and digital intellectual property.
- Lastly, it presents an industry with high potential for job creation, offering vast employment opportunities in sectors such as media, design, and technology.

Significance and Potential Impact

- The Orange Economy can significantly boost the soft power of a country, in this case, India's cultural influence on a global scale, through entertainment and storytelling.
- The global creative economy is estimated to be valued at over $2.25 trillion (UNCTAD, 2023) which presents a huge potential for supporting GDP growth. India's Media and Entertainment (M&E) sector alone is already valued at $28 billion (2025) with projections for growth up to $100 billion.
- Additionally, the Orange Economy provides dynamic career paths for India's young workforce, catering to their creativity and technological skills.

Current Event World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit

- At the recent World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025 in Mumbai, the Prime Minister of India advocated for the Orange Economy.
- He called for global companies to tap into India's burgeoning creative economy with the clarion call to "Create in India, Create for the World." This highlights the country's intent to become a significant player in the global Orange Economy scene.

Framework for Standardising Regulation Formulation & Public Feedback Process

Introduction and About

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced an allencompassing Framework for the Formulation of Regulations, which is designed to standardise regulatory procedures.
- This framework brings uniformity, transparency, and responsibility in creating and revising regulatory mechanisms.
- It includes all sorts of regulations, including directions, guidelines, notifications, policies, and standards issued by the RBI.

Public Consultation and Impact Assessment

- The new framework involves a public consultation process where draft regulations are to be published on the RBI's website alongside a Statement of Particulars and set open for public responses for a minimum of 21 days.
- Additionally, the draft needs to mention its objective, an impact analysis, in addition to reference to international best practices and global standards.

Feedback and Reviews

- The RBI is required to publish a general response to the public comments received, accompanying the final regulations.
- Existing regulations will also undergo periodic reviews based on supervisory feedback, global practices, and its relevance in the everchanging environment.

Importance and Benefits

- This framework promotes regulatory transparency and inclusivity by involving the public and other experts in its policymaking process.
- Because it combines public and expert input with evidencebased policymaking, it aligns Indian regulatory governance with global benchmarks.
- By eliminating unnecessary overlaps and updating regulations according to current needs, it attempts to enhance regulatory efficiency.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Introduction and About IMF

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a leading financial institution at global level.
- Its primary objective is to promote international monetary cooperation, economic stability, and trade expansion.
- The IMF was established as a component of the Bretton Woods Agreement with a mandate to establish a global economic order postWorld War II.
- The institution was established in 1945 and has been operational since 1947.
- The head office of IMF is situated in Washington D.C., United States.

Functioning of the IMF

- The IMF carries out its duties in three key ways: Surveillance, Capacity Building, and Lending.
- The 'Surveillance' involves monitoring both global economy and national economic developments, presenting information through significant reports such as the 'World Economic Outlook' and 'Global Financial Stability Report'.
- Through 'Capacity Building', the IMF provides policy advice and technical training in areas such as public finance, monetary policy, data analytics, and governance.
- In 'Lending', the IMF offers both short and longterm

financial support to help countries manage balanceofpayment crises.

IMF and its Funding

- The IMF's primary source of funding is member country quotas which are determined by each country's significance in the world economy.
- The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) further supplement reserves, boosting liquidity in the global financial system.

IMF Loan Instruments

- The IMF has various loan instruments available to support countries in different scenarios.
- The Extended Fund Facility (EFF) is designed to aid structural economic reforms.
- The Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) focuses upon the improvement of longterm economic sustainability.
- The Standby Arrangements (SBA) provides swift support during times of financial crisis.
- The loans provided by IMF often carry conditionality, known as 'Structural Adjustment Programs', which necessitate recipient countries initiating economic reforms.

Current IMF News Regarding India and Pakistan

- Recently, India abstained from the IMF vote that approved new financial assistance measures for Pakistan.
- India conveyed concerns over Pakistan's repeated misuse of IMF funds and its poor reform actions tied to crossborder terrorism risks.

Gaps in India's Bankruptcy Resolution Process as Flagged by Supreme Court

Introduction and About

- The Supreme Court (SC) of India recently raised concerns over the efficacy of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.
- The SC invoked Article 142 to reject a resolution plan under the IBC and ordered liquidation of a debtladen company.
- This raises questions about the capability of the IBC to facilitate timely and constructive resolutions.

Key Issues Highlighted by the Supreme Court

- The resolution plan for Bhushan Power & Steel Ltd. did not comply with Section 30(2) of the IBC, thereby not acting in the best interests of the creditors.
- The Resolution Professionals (RPs) displayed lack of diligence and enabled a flawed resolution plan to move forward.
- The Committee of Creditors (CoC), while evaluating the resolution plan, failed to exercise business acumen and adequate scrutiny, consequently compromising creditors' interests.
- The National Company Law Tribunal's inability to reject the flawed resolution plan revealed oversight gaps in the judicial process.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016

- The IBC, 2016 is a unified law for the restructuring and insolvency resolution of corporate bodies, partnership firms, and individuals in India.
- It was designed based on the recommendations of the T.K. Vishwanathan Committee (Bankruptcy Law Reforms Committee) 2015.
- The key objective of IBC is to expedite the resolution process, instil credit discipline, efficiently handle stressed assets, and boost the overall business environment.
- The IBC is overseen by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI). The adjudicating authority for corporate bodies is the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), and for individuals and firms, it is the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT).
- The IBC also provides a structured, timebound Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) for companies that default on repayments.

Key Achievements of IBC

- Since its inception, the IBC has facilitated the resolution of over Rs 3.16 lakh crore of debt in 808 cases.
- The effectiveness of the IBC has led to lower NonPerforming Assets (NPAs) ratios, with a 12year low of 0.6% reported in June 2024.
- The IBC has significantly contributed to India's improved position in the World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR), from 142nd in 2014 to 63rd in 2019.

India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI)

Introduction and About WPI

- The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is a measure of the average change in prices of goods traded in bulk by wholesalers to other businesses.
- It is a reflection of inflation at the producer level before the goods reach the end consumer.
- WPI is published monthly by the Office of Economic Adviser, under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The index serves the purpose of tracking price movements in wholesale markets and assessing cost pressures faced by producers and industries, thereby aiding in understanding supplydemand dynamics across primary, energy, and manufacturing sectors.

WPI Calculation and Features

- The base year for calculation of the WPI has been updated to 2011–12 from 2004–05 to align with GDP and IIP data.
- The calculation method used for WPI is a weighted average of prices from a basket of 697 items, across three main groups: Primary Articles, Fuel and Power, and Manufactured Products.
- WPI covers only goods and does not include services.
- It reflects price trends that occur before the retail level, in contrast to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which tracks consumer prices.

Current Situation

- In recent news, India's WPI inflation eased to a 13month low of 0.85% in April 2025, sharply down from 2.05% in March 2025, primarily driven by falling fuel and primary article prices.

Importance and Significance of WPI in India

- WPI serves as an early indicator of inflation trends and helps in analysing input cost pressures on producers.
- It is particularly essential for fiscal planning, business forecasting, and policymaking.
- WPI provides valuable insights into sectorspecific inflation, which is crucial for sectors like agriculture, mining, energy, and industry.
- It complements the CPI in macroeconomic analysis; however, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relies more on the CPI for its interest rate decisions.

India Ascends to World's 4th Largest Economy

Introduction

- India now stands as the world's 4th largest economy, outpacing Japan.
- This announcement came at the 10th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India).
- The GDP of India has now crossed USD 4 trillion.

India's Economic Growth

- India has maintained the stance of being the fastest expanding major economy worldwide.
- Within the next two years, it is the only nation expected to record over 6% annual growth.
- This consistent economic expansion is forecasted to elevate India's GDP to USD 5.58 trillion by 2028.
- This would enable India to exceed Germany and become the thirdlargest economy globally.

IMF 2025 World Economic Outlook Report

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its 2025 World Economic Outlook Report, projected that India would be the fourthlargest economy in 2025.
- India's nominal GDP was predicted to reach USD 4.187 trillion, surpassing Japan's USD 4.186 trillion.

About NITI Aayog

- Replacing the Planning Commission of India, NITI Aayog came into existence on 1st January 2015.
- Serving as India's top policy think tank, this institution focuses on cooperative federalism and sustainable territorial development via a bottomup approach.
- The Chairperson of NITI Aayog is the Prime Minister of India, while the ViceChairperson is appointed by the Prime Minister.
- The Governing Council includes Chief Ministers of all Indian states and Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories, thus capturing diversified representation from across the country.

IMF's World Economic Outlook (WEO)

- The IMF publishes the WEO biannually (in April and October) to analyse and project the global and individual countries' economic scenarios.
- It aims to evaluate economic developments, identify future trends, and suggest policy guidelines.
- Major WEO contents cover global and regional economic performance forecasts, insights into inflation trends, and assessment of financial stability risks.
- The WEO serves as a vital tool for policymakers, researchers, and investors to understand and navigate the economic environment.

Key Highlights of the RBI Annual Report 2024-25

Introduction

- The Reserve Bank of India released its Annual Report 202425, delivering a thorough appraisal of India's monetary policy, regulatory initiatives, economic updates, and emphasising financial stability.

Global and Indian Economic Overview

- Global growth in 2024 hit a low of 3.3%, lower than the historical average. However, an increase to 2.8% and 3.0% in 2025 and 2026, respectively, is anticipated.
- Inflation worldwide softened to 5.7% in 2024 from 6.6% the previous year, though services inflation persisted in leading advanced economies.
- Despite a dip in GDP growth to 6.5% in 202425, India held its position as the fastestgrowing major global economy.
- Record foodgrain production and agreeable weather conditions boosted the Agricultural GVA by 4.6%, while industrial growth slowed to 4.3%, and services sector's robust 7.5% growth accounted for 64.1% of the GVA.

RBI Balance Sheet Status

- The RBI's balance sheet expanded by 8.2% yearonyear, and its income rose by 22.77% due to an approx 33% surge in forex transaction yields and greater returns from investments, whereas expenditure grew by 7.76%.
- This resulted in a record surplus of Rs 2.68 lakh crore, which was 27.37% more than the previous year's Rs 2.11 lakh crore.
- With increased notes issued, revaluation accounts and other liabilities, the liabilities side also saw an expansion.
- As of March, 2025, foreign assets (including gold and loans) composed 74.27% of total assets, with domestic assets at 25.73%, while gold holdings increased by 57.48 metric tonnes to 879.58 metric tonnes.

Inflation Trends and Monetary Policy

- Headline inflation eased to 4.6% in 202425 from 5.4% in 202324, with core inflation at 3.5% and food inflation decreasing to 2.9% by March 2025.
- The Monetary Policy Committee maintained the repo rate at 6.50% throughout much of 202425 but shifted the stance from "withdrawal of accommodation" to "neutral" in October 2024, with the cash reserve ratio reduced to 4% in December 2024 to alleviate liquidity pressures.

External Sector and Fiscal Situation

- Despite a modest 0.1% growth in merchandise exports, an increase in imports by 6.2% widened the trade deficit to USD 282.8 billion.
- The Gross Fiscal Deficit (GFD) of the central government decreased to 4.7% of GDP in 202425 from 5.5% in 202324.

- An increase in both capital and revenue expenditure 5.2% and 5.8% respectively was noted.

The State of Indian Banking and Financial Sector

- Net household savings rose to 5.1% of Gross National Disposable Income in FY24.
- Bank credit growth surpassed deposit growth, enhancing the credittodeposit ratio marginally.
- Gross NonPerforming Assets (NPA) ratio and Net NPA ratio declined further.

Digital Payments, Financial Inclusion and Technological Initiatives

- In 202425, the volume of digital payments grew by 34.8%, its value by 17.9%.
- The Financial Inclusion Index of the RBI increased from 60.1 in 2023 to 64.2 in 2024, indicating a deeper usage of financial services.

Outlook for 2025-26

- The report projected a sustained GDP growth at 6.5% for India, with risks balanced and expected inflation at 4.0%.
- The central government intending to reduce the fiscal deficit to 4.4% of GDP in 202526, and aim for a reducing public debttoGDP ratio reaching 50% by 2031.

Challenges Highlighted in RBI Annual Report 202425

- The annual report underscored challenges including a marked rise in counterfeit note detection, a surge in bank fraud amounts, global uncertainties, inflation management issues, balancing fiscal consolidation, and capital expenditure, and climate change factors.

Proposed Measures for Economic Growth and Financial Stability

- The report proposed measures such as bolstering agrilogistics to control food inflation, fraud detection and prevention to enhance financial sector resilience, scaling the CBDC pilot to harness digital innovation and improve transaction efficiency, diversifying external sector to reduce vulnerability, increasing capital expenditure for longterm productivity gains and integrating climate risk assessment into banking supervision to reduce systemic risks.

GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

India's First InterState Cheetah Conservation Corridor

Description

- India's first interstate cheetah conservation corridor is a wildlife corridor project connecting protected habitats in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- It enables reintroduced cheetahs to roam freely and naturally across an extensive ecosystem.

Geographical Scope

- The total area covered by the corridor is around 17,000 sq. km, with 10,500 sq. km in Madhya Pradesh and 6,500 sq. km in Rajasthan.
- Key locations involved in the corridor include Palpur Kuno National Park, Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh and Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan.
- Various districts in Rajasthan are also part of the project, including Kota, Bundi, Baran, Jhalawar, Sawai Madhopur, Karauli, and Chittorgarh.

Key Features of the Corridor

- The corridor is the first on such a scale providing seamless movement for the cheetahs to migrate naturally between reserves.
- It aims for ecological restoration, primarily focusing on the conservation of the grassland ecosystem.
- The project is supported by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Wildlife Institute of India, with a possible Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the states.
- It stands as an exemplary conservation model in Asia, as acknowledged by experts.

Significance for India

- The project plays a crucial role in reviving the native species and supports India's cheetah reintroduction mission.
- It demonstrates the essence of cooperative federalism in ecological governance by involving different states.
- The project is in alignment with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) targets, aiming at protecting biodiversity and promoting sustainable use of resources.

Biological Diversity (Access and Benefit Sharing) Regulation, 2025

Introduction and About

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has introduced the Biological Diversity (Access and Benefit Sharing) Regulation, 2025.
- The aim of this regulation is to ensure a fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of biological resources.
- The regulation replaces the 2014 Guidelines, expanding its scope to cover Digital Sequence Information (DSI), now considered part of genetic resources.

Key Highlights of the Regulation

- Benefit Sharing Linked to Turnover: Users with an annual turnover exceeding Rs 1 crore must share a statement detailing resources used annually. The level of benefit sharing is proportionate to the turnover.
- HighValue Biological Resources: Benefitsharing from highvalue resources such as red sanders, sandalwood and agarwood should be at least 5% of the sale or auction amount. For commercial use, the sharing rate can surpass 20%.
- Digital Sequence Information (DSI): The digital code of an organism's genetic makeup is now included under the regulation.
- Researchers & Intellectual Property Applicants: Mandated benefitsharing applies to these individuals, whereas 1015% of the collected benefits are retained by NBA.
- Cultivated Medicinal Plants: These are exempt from

benefit sharing, as promoted by the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023 to foster cultivation and ease compliance for AYUSH practitioners.

Understanding 'Access and Benefit Sharing' (ABS)

- ABS refers to the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of biological resources (like plants and genetic material).
- This system relies on mutually agreed terms for the sharing of these resources and their benefits.
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including the Nagoya Protocol from 2010, provides a legally binding framework for ABS.
- COP16 of the CBD in Colombia in 2024, worked out details for sharing benefits from the use of DSI. India implements ABS via the Biological Diversity Act of 2002 and ABS Regulation of 2025.

About the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

- The NBA, established in 2003, is an advisory body for central government on biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefitsharing.
- It is based in Chennai and operates using a decentralized system which includes State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) and local Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).
- The SBBs guide state governments, while the BMCs deal with local biodiversity documentation and conservation.
- BMCs create People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs).
- Since its inauguration, they have assisted in creating SBBs in 28 States and 8 Union Territories and helped establish around 2,77,688 BMCs.`

Microplastic Infiltration in Oceans

Introduction and Summary of Study Outcomes

- According to a recent study published in Nature, microplastics are infiltrating the world's oceans at unprecedented levels.
- The study found microplastics are widespread across oceans, reaching depths of up to 100 metres and are no longer just surface pollutants.
- There's also evidence suggesting that shifts in the planet's biogeochemical and carbon cycles are being driven by microplastic pollution.
- Major contributors include fishing gear made of nylon and polyester, adding to the concentration of dense plastics, such as Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET).

Impact of Microplastics on the Carbon Cycle

- The study also reveals that the increase of microplastics in the water column disrupts the ocean's carbon cycle.
- Microplastic pollution adds allochthonous carbon to marine ecosystems.
- This could make marine samples appear 420 years older, posing a significant issue for scientists studying marine life and geological history.

Understanding Microplastics

- Microplastics, defined as plastics less than 5 millimetres in diameter, have potentially harmful effects on oceans and aquatic life.
- They can be classed as primary microplastics, which are tiny manufactured particlelike microbeads and microfibers, or secondary microplastics, which form when larger plastics degrade.
- Microplastics are known to attach themselves to red blood cells, reducing oxygen transport, and damaging human cells. Several reports have also found them in placentas and fetal organs.

Microplastics' Applications and Concerns

- Despite their potential harm, microplastics are used in numerous applications including drug delivery, industrial cleaning, and personal care products.
- However, the environmental and health concerns surrounding microplastics are significant, especially for young children who are particularly vulnerable to such exposure.

Regulations Governing Microplastics

- Efforts to control microplastic pollution include both international and local legislations.
- These include the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Plastics Treaty and, for India, the ban on SingleUse Plastics, Plastic Waste Management Rules 2016, and Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

Cloud Seeding A potential solution for Air Pollution and Water Scarcity

Introduction and About

- Cloud seeding refers to a weather modification technique aimed at enhancing precipitation.
- This process involves dispersing chemicals, which can constitute silver iodide, potassium iodide, or dry ice, into clouds.
- These chemicals serve the purpose of nuclei for water droplet formation, leading ultimately to rainfall.

Recent Updates

- The Delhi Cabinet has recently approved a project.
- The project aims to conduct trials of cloud seeding.
- This decision is directed towards addressing two significant issues, air pollution and water scarcity prevalent in the region.

Benefits and Importance of Cloud Seeding

- The process is perceived as a tool to combat air pollution, specifically during periods of high Air Quality Index (AQI) readings.
- The enhanced rainfall owing to cloud seeding may potentially increase water availability.
- This can result in various economic, environmental, and human health benefits.

Types of Cloud Seeding

- Static cloud seeding: This process involves introducing ice nuclei into cold clouds, instigating the formation of ice crystals or snowflakes.
- Dynamic cloud seeding: This type serves to stimulate rainfall by enhancing vertical air currents and promoting the growth of rain clouds.
- Hygroscopic cloud seeding: It uses fine particles of salts to increase the size of cloud droplets.
- Glaciogenic cloud seeding: This type is used for inducing ice formation in supercooled clouds, aiming to trigger precipitation. In addition to enhancing snowfall and increasing the mountain snowpack, it is also used for inducing rain in droughthit areas and reducing air pollution.

NorthEast India's First Geothermal Well in Dirang

Introduction and About

- Northeast India's first geothermal production well has been established in Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh.
- The well marks significant progress in renewable energy utilisation in the Himalayan region.
- The technology used in the project includes a closedloop binary organic Rankine cycle (ORC) system.
- This system utilises geothermal heat to vaporise an organic fluid in a secondary loop, which then drives a turbine to produce electricity.

The Dirang Geothermal Project

- Dirang Geothermal Project is the first geothermal energy project in Northeast India.
- Its goal is to make Dirang the first town wholly powered by geothermal energy.
- The project site is situated between quartzite and schist near major fault zones similar to those in the Himalayas, with a reservoir temperature of approximately 115°C.
- It aims to lessen reliance on diesel and firewood while boosting agricultural productivity and living standards in highaltitude areas.
- The project can potentially contribute to India's estimated 10,600 MW geothermal potential by providing stable, baseload renewable energy.

Geothermal Energy in India

- Geothermal energy, a form of heat from the Earth's interior created by radioactive decay, is renewable and furnishes baseload power.
- It is available 24/7 as the Earth continually generates heat.
- India has identified 381 thermally anomalous sites, according to the Geological Survey of India (GSI), with a capability to yield 10,600 MW, which could power 10 million households.
- Key projects showcasing geothermal energy include a 20 kW pilot plant in Manuguru, Telangana, and ONGC's 1 MW project in Puga Valley, Ladakh.
- India has also established collaborations with countries like Iceland (2007), Saudi Arabia (2019), and with the Renewable Energy Technology Action Platform (RETAP) of the US (2023) to further exploration and utilisation of geothermal energy.

Early Onset of SouthWest Monsoon in 2025: Causes, Criteria and Impact of Climate Change

Introduction and Overview

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported an earlier than usual onset of the southwest monsoon over Kerala in 2025, a significant event as monsoon rains account for over 70% of India's annual rainfall, which is pivotal for agriculture and the economy.
- The prior early onset occurred in 2009.

Determining the Onset of Monsoon

- IMD declares the onset of the monsoon after 10th May, based on key criteria including rainfall, wind field, and outgoing longwave radiation (OLR).
- For rainfall, 60% of 14 designated weather stations must record a minimum of 2.5mm of rain for two consecutive days.
- The wind field should involve westerly winds and specific atmospheric pressure measurements.
- The OLR value, indicating atmospheric heat promoting rainfall, must be below 200 W/m^2 in the specified region.

Causes of the Early Monsoon Onset in 2025

- Multiple phenomena, including the MaddenJulian Oscillation (MJO), Mascarene High, convection, the Somali Jet, a heatlow, the monsoon trough, the cyclonic monsoon vortex and pressure gradients, contributed to the early monsoon.
- The MJO, an eastwardmoving system of winds, clouds, and pressure disturbances, influences tropical weather including India, causing increased rainfall in its active phase.
- The intensity of the Mascarene High and an increase in convective activity also contributed to enhanced rains.

Impact of Climate Change on the Indian Monsoon

- Climate change has resulted in an increase in extreme rainfall events and a decrease in moderate rainfalls.
- Over the last 50 years, overall monsoon rainfall has decreased by 6%.
- There has been a significant increase in the frequency of heavy rainfall events, linked to rising global temperatures increasing the atmosphere's moistureholding capacity.

Withdrawal of Monsoon

- The withdrawal of the monsoon refers to the gradual retreat of the southwest monsoon from India.
- It represents the end of the rainy season, characterised by a cessation of rainfall for at least 5 consecutive days, changing wind patterns, reduced atmospheric moisture, and the formation of anticyclonic circulation.

DEFENCE

Operation Sindoor: India's Counterterrorist Offensive

Introduction and Context

- Operation Sindoor was launched by India in response to the tragedy in Pahalgam, which led to the loss of 26 innocent lives, including one citizen from Nepal, on April 22, 2025.
- This infamous terrorist assault was administered by The Resistance Front (TRF), affiliated with the already notorious terrorist organization, LashkareTaiba.

About Operation Sindoor

- The Pahalgam episode, which marked the gravest civilian targeted disaster since the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, served as the trigger for Operation Sindoor.
- Operation Sindoor's primary aspirations were to

dismantle the crossborder terrorist infrastructure, bring justice to the victims of the Pahalgam attack, obstruct potential future attacks as suggested by actionable intelligence, and reassert India's right to self defence under international law.

Operation Details

- The operation targeted nine terrorist camps: four in mainland Pakistan and five in Pakistanoccupied Kashmir (PoK), specifically focusing on JaisheMohammed, LashkareTaiba, and Hizbul Mujahideen.
- The execution of the operation, carried out by the Indian Air Force and Special Forces, was designed to specifically avoid both civilian areas and Pakistani military installations.

Strategic and Diplomatic Implications

- Through Operation Sindoor, India has sent across a formidable deterrent message to those who sponsor terrorist activities and provide them asylum.
- This operation highlights Pakistan's uninterrupted support for UNdesignated terrorists such as Sajid Mir to the world.
- It also manifestly illustrates India's transition towards a preemptive counterterrorism doctrine following the Uri and Balakot strikes.
- Diplomatically, the operation is likely to augment international support backing India's right to defend its civilians from terrorist attacks. One could anticipate greater awareness and activism against crossborder terrorism in the international sphere.

Nationwide Civil Defence Mock Drill

Introduction and Context

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs in face of increasing geopolitical tension has commanded a nationwide Civil Defence Mock Drill across 244 districts on May 7, 2025.
- The drill is aimed at evaluating emergency preparedness against possible military and disaster threats.

Understanding Civil Defence

- Civil defence refers to an organised approach to protect civilians, infrastructure, and critical services during emergencies. These emergencies could either be warlike situations or natural or manmade disasters.
- Globally, civil defence utilises six major pillars for functioning which include prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, evacuation, and recovery.

Legal Framework in India

- In India, the Civil Defence Act, 1968 was enacted following the IndoChina and IndoPak conflicts, to institutionalise civil protection.
- The act was later amended in 2009 to expand its role to cover disaster management in addition to warrelated functions.

Structure and Functioning

- The Civil Defence primarily comprises volunteers from various professions, these volunteers are trained to assist in emergency response.
- Deployment usually occurs in case of terror attacks, fires, floods, explosions, earthquakes, or other calamities, before the arrival of official responders.
- A special emphasis is laid on the critical initial minutes of emergencies.

Application of Civil Defence Act

- Though the Civil Defence Act applies to the entire country, active units of civil defence are only raised in areas that are tactically vulnerable.
- Such areas include nuclear power plants, ports, military bases, dams, oil refineries, and metropolitan cities.

About Civil Defence Districts

- Civil Defence Districts are those areas where civil defence programmes are actively implemented by the Government of India under the Civil Defence Act, 1968.
- Selection of these districts by the Ministry of Home Affairs is based on strategic vulnerability factors, these include proximity to international borders, presence of critical infrastructure, urban density and civilian risk, and coastal sensitivity.
- States closer to international borders like Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, states with critical infrastructure like nuclear plants, military bases, ports, telecom hubs, highdensity urban population requiring evacuation planning and maritime security in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal are taken into consideration.

IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN)

Introduction and Overview of IPLN

- The IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN) is a multilateral venture designed to develop a joint logistics infrastructure.
- Its primary goal is to enhance the coordination of civilian disaster response operations across the vast IndoPacific region.
- By establishing a shared logistics structure and promoting interoperability, IPLN aims to facilitate efficient and swift delivery of humanitarian aid.
- The initiative involves four major participants: India, United States, Japan, and Australia.

Launch of the IPLN Project

- A simulated launch of the IPLN project took place during a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) held at the AsiaPacific Centre for Security Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii.
- The launch is a parallel effort to the IndoPacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) and the Quad Pandemic Preparedness Workshop.

Key Features of IPLN

- Shared Logistics Coordination: An important feature is its ability to enhance supply chain responsiveness for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions.
- CivilianFirst Focus: IPLN specifically targets natural disaster preparedness and response during crises such as cyclones, tsunamis, and health emergencies.
- Interoperability and Trust: The network aims to construct mutual logistical support structures and reinforce operational coordination among Quad partners.

- TechnologyDriven: IPLN highly emphasises digital logistics mapping, joint resource planning, and realtime tracking systems.
- Flexible and Scalable: The IPLN model is designed to be applicable across IndoPacific islands, coastal states, and remote zones that require quick crisis response.

Strategic and Humanitarian Significance of IPLN

- IPLN plays a crucial role in strengthening regional disaster resilience and creating a robust emergency preparedness architecture.
- It helps reinforce Quad's image as a force for good beyond just security concerns by focusing on health, disaster relief, and humanitarian values.
- IPLN also aligns well with initiatives like One Health approach and Quadled Pandemic Preparedness Program, thus creating synergy between varied impactful efforts.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise INS Sharda in Maldives

Introduction and Overview

- The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sharda has arrived at Maafilaafushi Atoll, Maldives.
- The ship is there for a joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise with the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).

MAHASAGAR Vision and History of HADR Operations

- The joint exercise falls under India's "MAHASAGAR" vision, which stands for Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.
- MAHASAGAR is a strategy geared towards safety, security and growth in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Previously, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the Indian Navy conducted Operation Castor under its HADR operations.
- During this mission, vital relief was provided to the Maldives in the crisis.

Aims and Significance of the HADR Exercise

- The current HADR exercise seeks to enhance interoperability between the Indian Navy and the MNDF.
- This aims to improve their joint capabilities to respond effectively to humanitarian challenges.
- The effectiveness of the Indian Navy's operations was underscored by INS Sharda's successful rescue of 19 hostages from a hijacked Iranian vessel in 2024.

INS Sharda and Its Role

- INS Sharda (P55) is an Indian Sukanyaclass patrol vessel.
- It received an 'On the Spot Unit Citation' for its successful operation in 2024 off the coast of Somalia.
- This incident highlighted the Indian Navy's commitment to maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Bilateral and Trilateral Exercises between India and Maldives

- Bilateral exercises between India and Maldives include "Ekuverin" (Army exercise) and "Ekatha" (Navy exercise).
- Alongside these, a trilateral coast guard exercise "Dosti" is also conducted, involving Sri Lanka as well.

Definition and Geography of Atolls

- An atoll is a unique geographical feature, being a ringshaped coral reef, island, or series of islets.
- It encloses a water body known as a lagoon.
- Political and geographical importance of atolls lies in their contributions to biodiversity, tourism, and geopolitical significance.

Operation Keller: The Indian Army's Successful Neutralisation of TRF Chief

Introduction to Operation Keller

- Operation Keller was a concerted search and destroy mission conducted by the Indian Army, in sync with the J&K Police and CRPF.
- The operation was initiated on 13 May 2025, based on intelligence provided by the very effective Rashtriya Rifles.
- Located in Shoekal Keller, Shopian, the mission had specific and significant objectives to achieve.

Objectives of Operation Keller

- The primary objectives of this operation were multipronged:
- Firstly, it sought to neutralise TRF terrorists who were responsible for the Pahalgam attack which led to the unfortunate death of 26 civilians.
- Secondly, it aimed to eliminate Shahid Kuttay, a top commander and a major proxy of the Pakistanbacked LeT.
- Finally, the operation was directed towards preventing retaliatory threats and securing the volatile areas.

About the Shopian District

- The Shopian District, where the operation was concentrated, is located in the southern part of the Kashmir Valley, in the state of Jammu & Kashmir.
- Its geographical position is between Pulwama, Anantnag, Kulgam, and the Pir Panjal mountains.
- The district is at an altitude of 2,146 metres above sea level and experiences harsh, subzero winters temperatures can drop as low as 7°C.

Historical and Economic Importance of Shopian

- Shopian holds historical significance as it was only granted district status in 2007 prior to this, it was a tehsil of Pulwama.
- The district was part of the Mughal Road linking Lahore to Srinagar, an ancient trade route of critical value.
- Economically, the district primarily thrives through its apple orchards and agricultural activities.
- The local etymology of Shopian is believed to stem from "Shahpayan" (roughly translating to royal stay) or "Shinvan" (meaning snow forest).

The Success of Operation Keller

- With Operation Keller, the Indian Army successfully neutralised the TRF chief, Shahid Kuttay, who masterminded the Pahalgam terror attack.
- The operation ensured the neutralisation of the

significant threat that Kuttay represented while also offering a sense of security to the previously volatile areas.

Bhargavastra Counter Drone System: India's MicroMissile Defence Solution

Introduction and Overview

- Bhargavastra is a newly developed micro missilebased counterdrone system by Indian company named Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd (SDAL), in partnership with Economic Explosives Ltd.
- This system is designed to detect and neutralise hostile drones, including drone swarms, by utilising guided munitions.
- The system encompasses a design that ensures an inexpensive, rapid response solution to neutralising drone threats, particularly in regions classified as sensitive borders and conflict zones.

In the News

- India's successful trials of the Bhargavastra system have placed it in the limelight.
- This new low cost counterdrone micromissile system provides an affordable yet effective solution in counteracting drone threats.
- Being mounted on a mobile platform, it allows for flexible deployment across various terrains, such as high altitudes, combating the proliferation of drone threats across India.

Key Features

- Bhargavastra is equipped with a long detection range, being able to detect small aerial drones beyond a distance of 6 km.
- It supports the simultaneous launch of 64 micro missiles, thereby enabling rapid engagement of multiple targets.
- Has the ability to initiate salvo mode firing of two rockets within a span of 2 seconds.
- The system provides an extended engagement range wherein targets can be neutralised at distances beyond 2.5 km, ensuring optimal standoff protection.

Significance and Implications

- Bhargavastra is India's first micro missile based counterdrone system for Army Air Defence, symbolising a significant advancement in India's defence sector.
- This system is set to bridge a crucial gap in India's preparations for antidrone warfare, thus bolstering its defensive capabilities.
- It offers a cost effective alternative to more expensive air defence systems against low cost drone threats, demonstrating the system's significant potential in reshaping India's defence landscape.

Exercise Teesta Prahar by Indian Army

Introduction and Overview

- Exercise Teesta Prahar is a largescale military exercise held at the Teesta Field Firing Range, West Bengal, India.
- It is dedicated to simulating and validating combat operations in challenging riverine and allterrain environments.
- The exercise is organised by the Trishakti Corps of the Indian Army under the Eastern Command, involving various military branches including Infantry, Mechanised Infantry, Artillery, Armoured Corps, Para Special Forces, Army Aviation, Engineers and Signals for integrated battlefield operations.

Objective of Exercise Teesta Prahar

- The primary objective of Exercise Teesta Prahar is to promote seamless coordination or 'Jointness' between combat arms and support services for an integrated synergy on the battlefield.
- The exercise aims to enhance operational readiness by testing rapid mobilisation and quickresponse manoeuvres in realtime scenarios.
- The third objective targets the integration of technology in warfare, showcasing the use of nextgen weapon systems and modern military technologies.
- The exercise also aims to simulate future combat environments, practising tactical drills and battle rehearsals for hybrid and hightech warfare.

Key Features of Exercise Teesta Prahar

- The multibranch coordination for integrated battlefield synergy is a primary focus, encouraging jointness amongst various combat arms and service branches.
- The exercise practices rapid mobility drills enabling quick deployment across complex riverine terrain, testing the army's agility and responsiveness.
- The exercise also puts a focus on tech enabled warfare, incorporating advanced surveillance, communication, and weapon systems in battlefield scenarios.
- Emphasis on all terrain combat training prepares soldiers for a variety of geographical and environmental conditions, equipping them for any combat scenario.

Exercise Teesta Prahar in Current News

- The Teesta Prahar exercise reinforces the principle of interoperability in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor, India's successful joint ArmyAir Force strike which showcased the unity between different services.
- By encompassing the lessons learned from real combat situations, the Teesta Prahar exercise aims to strengthen and enhance the Indian Army's readiness and adaptability in diverse terrains and situations.

IMDEX Asia 2025 and India's Naval Engagement

IMDEX Asia 2025 and INS Kiltan (P30)

- INS Kiltan (P30) joined the International Maritime Defence Exhibition (IMDEX) Asia 2025 held at Singapore's Changi Exhibition Centre.
- This participation strengthens the strategic maritime presence of India and elucidates the significant naval ties in the IndoPacific region.

General Knowledge about IMDEX Asia

- IMDEX Asia, established in 1997 and held every two

years in Singapore, is a leading maritime and defence exhibition in the AsiaPacific region.

- The exhibition provides a worldwide stage for navies, coast guards and maritime defence industries to display naval platforms, introduce advanced technologies and participate in strategic policy dialogue.
- The key components of IMDEX Asia are the International Maritime Security Conference (IMSC) and the Maritime Information Sharing Exercise (MARISX).
- IMSC facilitates interaction among navy chiefs, coast guard heads, policymakers, and maritime experts to promote mutual security and advance collaborative solutions to global maritime challenges.
- MARISX is a scenario based exercise aimed at improving coordination and sharing best practices in maritime security.

Overview of INS Kiltan

- INS Kiltan is an indigenously constructed antisubmarine warfare stealth corvette and is the third of four Kamortaclass ships under Project 28.
- It carries the name of an island in the Aminidivi group of the strategically located Lakshadweep and Minicoy islands.
- INS Kiltan holds the distinction of being India's first primary warship with a carbon fibre composite superstructure, which improves stealth, reduces weight, and decreases maintenance costs.
- It carries forward the legacy of the Kiltan (P79), a Petya Class ship which was a part of 'Operation Trident' during the 1971 IndoPak war.

The Induction of INSV Kaundinya by Indian Navy

Introduction to INSV Kaundinya

- The Indian Navy has inducted the Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Kaundinya into their fleet, bringing an ancient shipbuilding technique back to life.
- INSV Kaundinya is notable for being crafted using the 'Tankai method', a stitched shipbuilding method.
- Named after a famed Indian mariner, Kaundinya, this vessel is set to carry out a historical journey to Oman by the end of 2025, retracing age old trade routes.

About Stiched Ship and Legend behind it

- INSV Kaundinya is a stitched ship modelled after a 5th century vessel depicted in the Ajanta cave paintings.
- Inspiration for this ship's design also comes from the ancient text Yuktikalpataru, written by King Bhoja in the 9th century, and descriptions of stitched Indian ships given by international travellers.
- In terms of aesthetics, the ship features symbolic motifs such as the Gandabherunda, a twoheaded eagle that represents the Kadamba dynasty, sun motifs on sails, a Simha Yali (mythical lion) on the bow, and a Harappan style stone anchor.
- The vessel is a tribute to Kaundinya, a 1st century Indian mariner known for his legendary sailing journey to the Mekong Delta where he married warrior queen Soma and cofounded the Kingdom of Funan (modern day Cambodia).
- His story, although not recorded in Indian sources, is preserved in Cambodian and Vietnamese records, and he is widely recognised as the first named Indian mariner to make voyages overseas with global historical impacts.

The Tankai Method

- The Tankai Method, an ancient Indian shipbuilding technique, is recognised for its manual craftsmanship and the use of indigenous, nonindustrial techniques.
- Key features of the Tankai method include: the Stitched Plank Technique, whereby teak, sal, or mango wood planks are drilled and stitched together with coir ropes before being sealed with cotton, resin, and fish oil for waterproofing.
- Metal fasteners are not used in this method, unlike the European practices. This is done to prevent rust, making the ships constructed using this method lighter, more flexible, and easier to repair.
- The construction process is unique too, with the hull being built first, followed by the addition of ribs. This provides better flexibility and durability in turbulent seas than the western technique of framefirst construction.
- The Tankai method solely relies on indigenous materials like coir rope, dammar resin, and animal fat all of which are resistant to seawater.

INS Sharda's Maiden Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise in Maldives

Introduction about the HADR Exercise and INS Sharda

- INS Sharda, an offshore patrol vessel of the Indian Navy, has arrived at Maafilaafushi Atoll, Maldives to participate in its inaugural Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise.
- The exercise is set to commence from May 4 and conclude on May 10, 2025.

Strategic Significance of HADR Exercise

- The initiative constitutes an element of India's broader strategic outlook aimed at nurturing regional maritime cooperation and boosting disaster readiness in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- The involvement represents India's dedication to its "Neighbourhood First" Policy, with a specific strategic and cultural significance attached to the Maldives as a proximate maritime neighbour.

Connection with India's MAHASAGAR vision

- The exercise aligns with the "MAHASAGAR" vision, which stands for Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions, recently unveiled by the Prime Minister in Mauritius.
- This vision fortifies India's position as a net security provider and the primary responder in the Indian Ocean.
- The MAHASAGAR vision extends India's initial SAGAR doctrine, which stresses inclusive security, regional cooperation, and disaster resilience.

Objectives of HADR Exercise

- The HADR exercise, according to the Indian Navy, has several key goals including:
- Elevating interoperability between the Indian Navy and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).
- Spearheading joint drills for Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, catastrophe response coordination, logistical backing, and medical assistance.
- Facilitating training sessions for capacity building.
- Involving local communities for the advancement of awareness and disaster resilience preparedness.

Tabletop Exercise Quad Countries and the IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN)

Introduction and About

- Tabletop Exercise Quad countries is a collective initiative by the Quad countries, namely the United States, India, Japan, and Australia.
- The group recently conducted a Tabletop Exercise in Honolulu, which served as a starting point for the IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN).
- The primary intention of the IPLN is to enhance shared logistics for civilian disaster response in the IndoPacific region.

Why in News / Current Developments

- The exercise carried out by the Quad countries has successfully grabbed attention since it is a significant step towards strengthening cooperation amongst these countries.
- Conducted in Honolulu, this exercise marked the initiation of the IndoPacific Logistics Network (IPLN).
- The goal of this collaborative exercise is to boost shared logistics for civilian disaster response in the geographically sensitive IndoPacific region.

Historical Context and Geographical Importance

- The Quad countries, as a cooperative effort, carry immense historical significance, bringing together four powerful countries for shared regional stability.
- The recent exercise highlights the strategic influence of these countries in the IndoPacific area.
- The geographical significance of the IndoPacific region is underscored by its vulnerability to natural disasters; hence, the importance of a collective disaster response mechanism such as IPLN.

Importance and Strategic Goals

- The exercise reflects the strategic goal of the Quad countries for a Free and Open IndoPacific region.
- It underscores the spirit of cooperation, resilience, and nonmilitary humanitarian support among these countries.
- Beyond strategic interests, the initiative also mirrors the Quad's commitment towards civilian disaster response, showcasing the group's desire to extend nonmilitary aid in critical times.
- It has the potential to reaffirm the importance of cooperation, resilience, and nonmilitary support in a geopolitically sensitive region, thereby demonstrating the Quad countries' shared commitment to regional stability and prosperity.

Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2025

Introduction and About

- Exercise Nomadic Elephant is a joint military exercise between India and Mongolia which has been conducted annually since its inception.
- The exercise commenced in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for its 17th edition in the year 2025.
- Are designed to foster and enhance military cooperation, tactical interoperability, and operational coordination between the participating nations.
- This bilateral exercise alternates in location between India and Mongolia each year.

Current Edition

- The current edition, Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2025, is being conducted in Mongolia's capital city, Ulaanbaatar.
- The Indian contingent participating in the current edition includes 45 personnel primarily from the Arunachal Scouts, renowned for their expertise in highaltitude warfare.
- The exercises are aimed at promoting professional military exchanges, supplying combat training, and enhancing joint operational readiness under terrains relevant to both armies.

History

- The exercise has a history dating back to the initial years of the 21st century, with the commitment of strengthening bonds through military cooperation between India and Mongolia.
- The previous edition, Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2024, was held in Umroi, Meghalaya in India.

Importance and Relevance

- Exercise Nomadic Elephant reflects the strong bond and longterm strategic partnership between India and Mongolia.
- It aids in the exchange of best practices and experiences between the two armies, proving to be mutually beneficial and improving their efficiency.
- The exercise notably contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region.
- It prepares the participating troops for a combined operational aspect, potentially required in future joint missions.
- Given the global developments around and the geographical importance of the region, such exercises are considered crucial for regional peace and stability.

Golden Dragon 2025 A Joint Military Exercise by China and Cambodia

Introduction and About Golden Dragon 2025

- Golden Dragon 2025 represents the largestever joint military exercise launched by China and Cambodia.
- The exercise is an annual bilateral drill first initiated in 2016 with the intention of strengthening military cooperation and strategic relationships between the two nations.
- Golden Dragon 2025, the official theme of which is joint counterterrorism operations and humanitarian

relief, is portrayed as a peacebuilding and capacitybuilding initiative.

Significance and Geography

- The 2025 edition took place at the Ream Naval Base, situated on Cambodia's southern coast in Sihanoukville.
- This base was officially inaugurated in April 2025, with the docking of Chinese warships indicating China's expanding naval presence in the Gulf of Thailand.
- The exercise featured advanced military technologies like reconnaissance and attack drones, surgical robots, and robot dogs; indicating a shift towards techcentric warfare capabilities.

Current Implications

- The Golden Dragon drills coincided with the U.S. Philippinesled 'Balikatan' exercise involving troops from the U.S, the Philippines, Australia, and Japan.
- The growing Chinese access to dualuse ports in countries like Cambodia, reflects similar concerns prevailing in Sri Lanka (Hambantota) and Pakistan (Gwadar).
- This strategic exercise showcases China's growing ability to project military power beyond its immediate borders, aligning with its "String of Pearls" strategy.

Importance

- Being able to execute such largescale military exercises bolsters the defence capabilities of both China and Cambodia.
- The drills aim at enhancing the strategic ties between the two nations, thereby maintaining peace and stability in the region.
- The engagement also serves as a testament to China's expanding influence and military presence in the international maritime scene, particularly in the Gulf of Thailand.

POLITY

Overview of Personality Rights in India

Introduction to Personality Rights

- Personality Rights are designed to protect an individual's public persona which includes name, voice, image, or mannerisms. They form part of a broader right to privacy or property and give individuals control over the commercial use of their name, image, or likeness.
- These rights can be further divided into two categories:
- The Right of Publicity that protects an individual's image and likeness from unauthorised commercial use, similar to trademark rights.
- The Right to Privacy prevents the public representation of one's personality without consent.

Implementation of Personality Rights in India

- In India, the Right to Privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution provides the closest protection although it's not expressly mentioned.
- Certain provisions in Indian laws indirectly support personality rights.
- The 1957 Copyright Act protects personality rights against misusing a person's identity through 'passing off' and deception. It also grants creators or performers moral rights, such as the right to be credited and to oppose any alterations that could harm their reputation.
- The 1999 Indian Trademarks Act, Section 14, restricts the use of a trademark that falsely suggests a connection with a living or deceased person within the last 20 years without obtaining consent.
- The 2000 Information Technology Act, Section 66C, addresses the punishment for identity theft, specifically fraudulent or dishonest use of someone else's electronic signature, password, or unique identification feature.

Significant Court Rulings and Current News

- Madras High Court recently ordered Meta and Telegram to remove fake accounts misusing images and audio of choreographer Anita R. Ratnam, a pioneer of the 'Neo Bharatam', a unique dance style.
- Previously, the Supreme Court ruled that rights to privacy, publicity, and personality are not inheritable and cease upon the actor's death ('Krishna Kishore Singh vs Sarla A Saraogi Case, 2021').
- The Supreme Court also affirmed privacy as part of the right to life under Article 21 but stated it can be restricted for a legitimate state aim with proportionate measures ('Justice KS Puttaswamy vs Union of India Case, 2017').
- The Madras High Court recognised personality rights, despite the absence of a specific statutory definition in India ('Shivaji Rao Gaikwad vs Varsha Production Case, 2015').
- The Delhi High Court confirmed the importance of an individual's popularity or fame online as in real life ('Arun Jaitley vs. Network Solutions Private Limited Case, 2011').
- Finally, the Delhi HC ruled in favor of D.M. Entertainment Pvt. Ltd., stating that the unauthorised sale of dolls imitating Daler Mehndi's likeness and songs violated his personality rights, thereby asserting his commercial right over the use of his public image ('D.M. Entertainment vs. Baby Gift House Case, 2010').

Reviving Private Members' Bills in India

Introduction and background

- Private Members' Bills (PMBs) are introduced by Members of Parliament who are not Ministers, which allows them to advocate for legal changes significant to their particular constituencies.
- Such bills allow for independent legislative proposals and discussions beyond the government's agenda.
- The Vice President of India recently emphasised the potential of PMBs, referring to them as a "gold mine" for India's democracy.

Procedure for PMBs

- The procedure for presenting PMBs involves crafting and submission of the bill with at least one month's notice.
- The bill is then introduced in Parliament, typically debated in limited Friday sessions, and may either be withdrawn or moved forward for voting.

Decline of PMBs

- Since India's independence, only 14 PMBs have been passed in both Houses and received Presidential assent. There hasn't been a successful PMB since 1970.
- The number of PMBs introduced in the 17th and 18th Lok Sabha was substantial; however, a disappointingly low number were discussed.

The Role of PMBs in Empowering Indian Democracy

- PMBs foster legislative innovation by enabling MPs to explore issues beyond the government's immediate focus.
- For example, while the 'Right to Disconnect' Bill (2019) wasn't passed, it initiated a nationwide dialogue on worklife balance and mental wellbeing.
- Prominent PMBs like the 'Rights of Transgender Persons' Bill (2014) have driven social change, even though the bill didn't completely pass through both Houses.

Challenges Undermining the Importance of PMBs

- The relevance of PMBs is hampered due to minimal time allocation for discussion, often due to sessions being disrupted by urgent government business or lack of MPs' seriousness.
- Structural constraints like the absence of a review committee and the AntiDefection Law encompassing party discipline also demote the potential of PMBs.

Recommendations for PMBs Revival

- Safeguarding time for PMBs in Parliament's schedule, including considering extending parliamentary working hours could enhance the efficiency of these sessions.
- Institutional changes such as establishing a PMB Review Committee and initiating a fasttrack process for highimpact PMBs may revitalize their relevance.
- Innovations in time and format, promoting political engagement, and boosting visibility through different channels could enhance this underutilised tool of Parliament.

Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules

Introduction and About

- The Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules were notified in 2023 under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.
- These rules regulate the control of the stray dog population, primarily employing methods of sterilisation and immunisation, as opposed to culling.

Execution of ABC Rules

- The ABC Rules require local bodies to form dog sterilisation centres, maintain suitable facilities, and execute a humane cycle of capture, sterilising, vaccination, and release of dogs.
- Strays are humanely captured by trained personnel to begin this cycle.
- The dogs then undergo spaying/neutering and receive an antirabies vaccination.
- After recovery, the dogs are released back into the same locality from where they were captured, in accordance with Supreme Court guidelines.

Significance of ABC Rules

- The ABC Rules assist in controlling the overpopulation of stray dogs without violating their animal rights.
- These rules also play an integral role in public health protection by reducing the incidence of rabies.
- The most notable aspect of these rules is that they encourage the scientific and ethical management of animals instead of resorting to culling.

Current Developments

- Kerala has currently demanded alterations to the ABC Rules amidst rising concerns of public health caused due to increased stray dog attacks and a surge in rabies cases.
- These developments reflect the need for upgraded regulation that can effectively balance animal rights and public health safety.
- In conclusion, the ABC rules, by emphasising sterilisation over culling, offer a humane method of managing the stray dog population. However, rising public health issues warrant necessary adjustments and increased effectiveness of such regulations.

The Chief Justice of India

Introduction and Context

- Justice BR Gavai was sworn in as the 52nd Chief Justice of India on May 14, 2025, marking a landmark moment for the office of the Supreme Court leader.
- The swearingin ceremony was conducted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- Justice Gavai has created history by becoming the first Buddhist and the second Dalit person to assume this post. His predecessors include Justice KG Balakrishnan.

Role and Responsibilities of Chief Justice

- The Chief Justice of India serves as the head of the Supreme Court, as well as the judicial system of the country.
- Holding the title "Master of the Roster", they are entrusted with case allocation and providing judicial leadership.
- This role additionally involves advising the government on legal and constitutional matters and overseeing court functioning.

Constitutional Provisions and Appointment

- The appointment of the Chief Justice, as well as Judges of the Supreme Court, is governed by Article 124(2) of the Indian Constitution.
- Their appointment is made by the President of India, following a recommendation from the outgoing CJI, adhering to the principle of seniority.
- The process entails the Law Minister seeking the outgoing CJI's recommendation, afterwards consulting with senior Supreme Court judges if required.
- This recommendation is then forwarded to the Prime Minister, who then advises the President, who finally appoints the new Chief Justice.

- The oath of office to the appointed individual is administered by the President itself.

Noteworthy Powers and Functions of the CJI

- As the Master of the Roster, the CJI allocates cases to benches and forms Constitution benches.
- They play a decisive role in guiding judicial policy and jurisprudence.
- The CJI exercises chief administrative authority by appointing court officers and functioning of the court.
- In rare instances, their duties can extend to discharging presidential duties if both the President and Vice President's offices are vacant.
- All appointments of Supreme Court and High Court judges, except the CJI itself, must be made in consultation with the CJI.

Supreme Court's Advisory Jurisdiction

Introduction and about Advisory Jurisdiction

- Advisory jurisdiction gives the President of India the capability to request the Supreme Court's advice on critical issues of the nation, primarily on questions of law or fact of public importance.
- This kind of jurisdiction gives room for the interpretation of the constitution without the necessity of a direct legal dispute.
- Notably, any opinion provided under the advisory jurisdiction is not binding, unlike typical judicial rulings.

Constitutional Foundation and Essence

- The power behind the advisory jurisdiction is anchored in Article 143(1) of the Indian constitution. This article enables the President to consult the Supreme Court on any important question, either of law or fact.
- Additionally, Article 143(2) concerns matters pertaining to preconstitutional treaties, accords, or covenants that primarily involve former princely states.

Key Characteristics of Advisory Jurisdiction

- Advisory jurisdiction carries a discretionary nature; not all references made to the Supreme Court must be answered.
- The advisory opinions offered under this jurisdiction are nonbinding, meaning they aren't enforceable.
- Matters under advisory jurisdiction must be heard by a Constitution Bench, with a minimum of five judges, as stipulated in Article 145(3).
- This jurisdiction serves as a source of independent legal advice to the President, outside of cabinet opinions.

Historical Applications of Article 143 and Recent Developments

- Since Indian independence in 1950, Article 143 has been enacted a total of 14 times.
- Key instances include the Delhi Laws Act Case (1951), Berubari Union Case (1960), Kesavananda Bharati Followup (1973), Judges Appointment Reference (1998), Cauvery Dispute (1992) and the Ayodhya Site (1993).
- Currently, the advisory jurisdiction has been invoked by the President of India, seeking clarification on whether there are any limits on the time the President and Governors can take to act on state legislature Bills.

Geographic and Historical Importance

- Advisory jurisdiction represents the wisdom of India's forefathers in establishing channels for deeply thought out decisions on critical national issues.
- Respectively, it conveys the rich cultural tradition of Indian democratic practice in decision making, ensuring every move aligns with the spirit of the constitution.
- Regionally, this jurisdiction denotes the Supreme Court's significance not only in judicial matters but even in providing guidance on critical legal and fact-based issues.

Exploring the Presidential Reference under Article 143 of the Indian Constitution

Introduction and Definition of Article 143

- Article 143 under the Indian Constitution empowers the President to seek the Supreme Court's (SC) advisory opinion on any question of law or fact of public importance.
- This provision sets up the SC's advisory jurisdiction, which is established exclusively for the President.
- Types of references include Article 143 (1) and 143 (2), which concern matters of public importance and disputes arising from preconstitution agreements, respectively.
- It is important to note that this advice from the SC is not binding on the President, allowing him/her the discretion of following or disregarding the opinion given.

Historical Context and Evolution

- The concept of advisory jurisdiction under Article 143 is derived from the Government of India Act, 1935.
- Around 15 Presidential references have been made to the SC under Article 143 throughout history, covering an array of significant cases and decisions.
- Distinguished examples include the Delhi Laws Act case (1951), Kerala Education Bill (1958), Berubari case (1960), and the Third Judges case (1998).

The Current Constitutional Matter

- The recent reference made by the President to SC under Article 143 is centred around 14 main constitutional questions.
- This move comes in the backdrop of a latest SC judgement, which leveraged Article 142 in the State of Tamil Nadu v The Governor of Tamil Nadu Case, 2023.
- The main issues under consideration relates to timelines allocated for President and Governors, and the extent of the SC's power under Article 142.

Importance of the Presidential Reference System

- The Presidential reference under Article 143 facilitates a better understanding of the constitutional roles of the President and Governors.
- It also provides an opportunity to redefine the balance of power among the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches of the government, fostering a smooth democratic process.

- The system could provide a defined legal framework essential for dispute resolution in a federal structure.

Challenges Surrounding the Presidential Reference System

- One of the major challenges is the nonbinding nature of the SC's advice to the President.
- The system could potentially be misused for political gains, raising doubts about the effectiveness and true constitutional significance of the referral.
- Delays due to the lack of a set timeline for the SC to respond could affect governance and policy clarity.

Conclusion

- The Presidential reference under Article 143 represents a significant constitutional operation, underlining the need for clarifying judicial intervention parameters and the extent of executive actions.
- This procedure can shape the separation of powers and strengthen India's federal democratic structure through enhanced constitutional transparency.

InterServices Organisations Rules 2025: India's Strategic Military Reforms

Introduction and Summary

- India has announced the Interservices Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Rules, 2025, under the InterServices Organisations Act of 2023.
- This move aims at enhancing the command, control, and administrative efficiency of InterServices Organisations (ISOs) and is a result of learned experiences from Operation Sindoor.

About InterServices Organisations (ISOs)

- ISOs comprise units or commands from two or more Armed Forces branches—Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- They are designed to streamline integrated planning, operations, and logistics.
- Examples of this approach include the Andaman and Nicobar Command or upcoming theatre commands under India's theatre-oriented plan.

InterServices Organisations Act 2023

- The ISO Act 2023 addresses challenges from separate service laws which often impede coordination and discipline in joint service settings.
- While not amending existing laws, the ISO Act empowers officers within ISO Command with administrative and disciplinary authority over all personnel under their command, regardless of service.
- It formally recognises joint services command organisations like the Andaman and Nicobar Command and the Defence Space Agency while paving the way for new ISOs.

The ISO Rules 2025

- The ISO Rules 2025, as laid down by the Section 11 of the ISO Act, 2023, aim to provide a framework for effective management of discipline and administration across the Armed Forces operating within an ISO.
- The Joint Services Command and the InterServices Establishment comprise personnel from either two or all three armed forces.
- The Joint Services Command is headed by a CommanderinChief, and an Interservices Establishment is commanded by an OfficerinCommand.
- Elaborate leave, absence, and emergency protocols have been laid down for commanding officers in these rules.
- Uncertainties related to command and control will be referred to the Central Government.

The Significance of InterServices Organisations

- By allowing for joint planning and realtime coordination, one can see enhanced operational synergy among Army, Navy, and Air Force units.
- ISOs permit pooling of logistics and support functions, preventing duplication and conserving resources.
- It is hoped that joint training and planning will improve combat readiness.
- The integration represents strategic reform and modernisation and aligns India's military structure with evolving geopolitical challenges.

RANK REPORTS AWARDS

The Pulitzer Prizes 2025

Introduction to Pulitzer Prize

- The Pulitzer Prize is an eminent award in the United States recognizing outstanding achievement in journalism and the arts.
- The award has been acknowledged since 1917 and is administered by Columbia University in collaboration with the Pulitzer Prize Board, comprised of judges appointed by Columbia University.
- The award is named after Joseph Pulitzer, a respected newspaper publisher who designated money in his will to both establish a School of Journalism at Columbia University and institute the Pulitzer Prize.

Reward details

- Each awardee receives a certificate and prize money of USD 15,000.
- Additionally, the winner in the Public Service Category is bestowed a gold medal.

Pulitzer Prizes 2025

- The prizes for the year 2025 were categorised into 23 sections, with 15 categories focusing on journalism and 8 on books, drama, music, and other artistic sectors.
- The awards recognised several notable works and efficient reporting across the media industry.

Noteworthy Awardees of Pulitzer Prizes 2025

- Fiction: Percival Everett was awarded for his novel 'James' that depicts the story of 'Huckleberry Finn' from a slave's perspective.
- Drama: Branden JacobsJenkins was recognised for "Purpose," a play that unravels the internal

complexities of a wealthy black family.

- Journalism: Prominent publications such as The New York Times, The New Yorker, and The Washington Post bagged multiple Pulitzers for their swift reporting on the Trump assassination attempt.
- Public Service: Kavita Suarna, Lizzie Presser, Cassandra Jaramillo, and Stacy Kranitz were honoured for their reporting on deaths of pregnant women due to obscure abortion law exceptions.
- Other category winners included the Wall Street Journal for National Reporting, Reuters for Investigative Reporting, and Mark Warren of Esquire for Special Writing.

Contribution to Journalism and the Arts

- The Pulitzer Prize continues to uphold the highest standards of journalism and the arts, recognising and rewarding individuals who significantly contribute to these fields.
- It serves as a platform that brings national and international focus to several important issues and narratives through journalism and the arts, encouraging informative and impactful works.

"Enhancing Competitiveness of MSMEs in India" Report

Introduction to the Report

- The "Enhancing MSMEs Competitiveness in India" report was released by NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Institute for Competitiveness (IFC).
- The aim of the report is to provide a strategy for the growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in India through proposed policy reforms.
- The key areas of reform highlighted include improved access to credit, enhanced skilling strategies, fostering innovation and developing market linkages.

Report's Key Findings

- From 2020 to 2024, the report states an increase in the share of micro and small enterprises accessing formal credit from 14% to 20%.
- Medium establishments also saw an increase in credit access from 4% to 9%. However, it reported that only 19% of the total MSME credit demand was met.
- There emerged a considerable skill and technological challenge, given the lack of formal vocational training, low investment in Research & Development, and outdated technology.
- The report recommends robust support for digital marketing, branding, clusterbased technology adoption and an increased focus on policy awareness amongst MSMEs.
- It also suggests the need for better data integration, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring at the state level.
- The report calls for increased support for MSMEs in Northeast and Eastern India through targeted incentives and logistics partnerships.

About NITI Aayog

- The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) was established on 1st January 2015 as India's apex public policy advisory body.
- It replaced the Planning Commission with the objective to promote cooperative and competitive federalism.
- Its mandate involves fostering evidence-based policymaking, encouraging innovation, and promoting sustainable development.
- The chairperson of NITI Aayog is the Prime Minister of India, while the Vice Chairperson is appointed by the Government.
- The structure includes a Governing Council with Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors, and Union Ministers, as well as fulltime and parttime members from various spheres like academia, industry, and administration.

Other Notable Reports by NITI Aayog

- NITI Aayog has released other significant reports, including the Strategy for New India @75, India Innovation Index, SDG India Index, Export Preparedness Index, School Education Quality Index (SEQI), Ease of Doing Business: State Rankings, and National Multidimensional Poverty Index.

Detailed Overview of India's Performance in the Human Development Index 2023

Introduction to Human Development Index (HDI)

- The HDI is a statistical measure assessing a country's performance in three major dimensions — Health, Education, and Standard of Living.
- The Health aspect is measured by life expectancy at birth; Education by mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling; and Standard of Living by Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).
- First introduced in 1990, the HDI was established in the maiden Human Development Report by Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) undertakes the publication of the HDI.

India's Progress in HDI 2023

- India's HDI Rank in 2023 stood at 130 out of 193, showing an improvement from the 133rd position in 2022, as per the 2025 Human Development Report.
- The HDI Value for 2023 was 0.685, up from 0.676 in 2022. India continues to be categorised under Medium Human Development, inching closer to the High Development threshold of 0.700.
- The country presents the same HDI value as Bangladesh while showing improved indicators as compared to Pakistan (Rank 168th, HDI 0.544) and Nepal (Rank 145th, HDI 0.622).

India's Noteworthy Achievements

- An improved life expectancy to 72 years in 2023 from 67.7 years in 2022.
- Expected years of schooling rose to 13 years from 12.6 years.
- Mean years of schooling also saw an improvement to 9 years from 6.57 years.
- GNI per capita rose to $9,046.76 in 2023, an improvement from $6,951 in 2022.

- 135 million Indians exited poverty between the years 201516 to 2019 21.

Persisting Inequalities in India

- India experiences a 30.7% loss due to inequality in HDI, marking one of the highest rates in Asia.
- Female labour force participation and political representation continue to be low, with India ranking 102nd with a score of 403.
- India's rank in GNI per Capita stands seven ranks below its HDI rank, indicating income disparity remains a challenge.

Global Trends in HDI 2023

- Top performers of the HDI 2023 included Iceland (0.972), Norway (0.970), and Switzerland (0.970) while the least successful countries were South Sudan, Somalia, and the Central African Republic.
- BRICS nations including Brazil (Rank 89), Russia (Rank 59), China (Rank 75), and South Africa (Rank 110) stood ahead of India in the HDI 2023.
- The pace of global HDI growth in 2023 has been the slowest since 1990.
- Inequality between low and high HDI countries saw an increase for the fourth consecutive year.

World Economic Outlook Report 2025

Introduction and About

- The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) biannual World Economic Outlook (WEO) for April 2025 projects India overtaking Japan as the world's fourth-largest economy in 2025.
- Highlights of the World Economic Outlook Report 2025
- Global Growth Forecast: The IMF revised the global growth rate downwards to 2.8% for 2025, with a projected increase to 3.0% for 2026.
- US Growth: Anticipated U.S. economic growth is curbed by policy uncertainty and trade tensions, leading to only 1.8% growth projection for 2025.
- Emerging Markets: A slow growth rate is projected for developing economies and emerging markets, with a 3.7% growth rate forecast for 2025, still superior to the global average.
- Global Inflation: Global inflation rates are anticipated to descend but at a slower pace, due to trade tensions and unstable financial markets.
- Aging Economies: As fertility rates decline and life expectancy increases, economies are aging fast. This demographic shift presents challenges for economic growth with the world's average age expected to rise by 11 years from 2020 to 2100. Health improvements in old age will however add 0.4% to global GDP growth from 2025 to 2050.

Indian Economy Overview

- Notwithstanding a slight revision down to 6.2% for 2025, India's growth forecast remains relatively impressive on the global stage.
- The IMF envisions India's nominal GDP to reach USD 4.187 trillion in 2025.
- Despite a slight downturn in growth, India continues to surpass most regional and global competitors, including China.
- Private consumption, particularly in rural areas, contributes significantly to India's growth, expected to remain robust amid global economic uncertainties.

India's Economic Resilience

- Private Consumption: Heavy reliance on private consumption, especially in rural areas, ensures consistent domestic demand amid global economic challenges.
- Macroeconomic Fundamentals: Reduced debttoGDP ratio and implementation of structural reforms contribute to India's economic stability.
- Infrastructure Development: Investments in infrastructure and digitalization are instrumental in increasing productivity and generating jobs.
- Government Reforms: Various government initiatives promote financial inclusion and boost manufacturing, fueling India's economic powerhouse.
- Demographics and Labour Force: The country profits from a youthful, expanding workforce, striving to increase female labor participation and tackling global aging workforce challenges.
- Technological Innovation: Rapid adoption of digital technologies bolsters productivity and resilience in economic activities, forecasting the creation of 50 million new jobs and a trillion-dollar addition to the economy by 202930.
- External Demand and Trade Diversification: India's integration into global value chains and trade agreements present growth opportunities and buffers against global volatility.

IMF's World Economic Outlook Report

- The World Economic Outlook report is a biannual publication by the IMF in April and October.
- Its aim is to evaluate global and individual countries' economic developments, identify trends, and propose policy recommendations.
- The report includes forecasts for global and regional economic performance and offers insights into inflation trends.
- The WEO serves as a crucial tool for policymakers, researchers, and investors to understand and navigate the economic landscape.

The State of the World's Nursing 2025 Report

Introduction

- The World Health Organization (WHO) released the State of the World's Nursing 2025 report on International Nurses Day.
- Key Findings of the SoWN 2025 Report
- The report reveals that the global nursing workforce grew from 27.9 million in 2018 to 29.8 million in 2023.
- However, there is a concentration noted with 78% of nurses being in countries that represent just 49% of the global population.
- The global nurse-to-population ratio is 37.1 per 10,000, with Europe having five times more nurses than Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.

- The workforce is projected to reach 36 million by 2030, reducing the shortage from 5.8 million in 2023 to 4.1 million.
- About 70% of shortages are concentrated in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.
- The report also backs regulations 92% of countries have regulatory bodies for nurses, and 94% have minimum wage laws, but only 42% provide mental health support.

Nurse Scenario in India

- The nurse-to-population ratio in India is only 1.9 nurses per 1,000 people, which is below the WHO's recommended ratio.
- With over 3.3 million nurses registered with the Indian Nursing Council, this is insufficient for India's large population.
- India is planning to add more nursing colleges by mid2025, adding 15,700 Bachelor of Science in Nursing seats across the country.

Challenges Facing India's Nursing Sector

- Due to a shortage of nurses, the existing professionals are overworked, which further impacts on the quality of care and leads to burnout.
- There is also an imbalance in the representation of nurses across urban and rural locations.
- Many nurses lack access to specialised education, and are also underpaid compared to global standards.
- Nurses in India face social stigmas, harassment, and a high rate of migration due to better opportunities abroad.

International Nurses Day

- International Nurses Day is observed on 12th May by the International Council of Nurses.
- This day is significant because it's the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.
- Florence Nightingale was renowned for her work in the Crimean War and her contributions to nursing and societal reforms.
- The theme of the year 2025 is: "Our Nurses. Our Future. Caring for nurses strengthens economies."

Topic: The 58th Jnanpith Award 2023

Introduction

- The 58th iteration of the esteemed Jnanpith Award has been conferred by the President for the year 2023.
- Noted Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya and illustrious poetlyricist Gulzar are the proud recipients.

Jagadguru Rambhadracharya

- Recognised for his vast knowledge and devotion in the area of Sanskrit, Rambhadracharya has held the revered title of 'Jagadguru Ramanandacharya' since 1982.
- A spiritual leader of Hinduism, his contributions extend beyond academia to encompass religious service, witnessed by his leadership of Tulsi Peeth in Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh.
- The author of over 240 works, four of which are Sanskrit epics, he was honoured with the prestigious Padma Vibhushan in 2015.

Gulzar (Sampooran Singh Kalra)

- Gulzar, the pseudonym of Sampooran Singh Kalra, is a highly regarded figure in Urdu literature and poetry, making his mark in cinema as a filmmaker and lyricist.
- He is the inventive mind behind the Triveni poetic form and responsible for timeless cinematographic contributions such as Maachis, Aandhi, and Koshish.
- His expertise has been recognised with the Padma Bhushan (2004), Sahitya Akademi Award (2002), Dadasaheb Phalke Award (2013), an Oscar (2009), a Grammy (2010), and five National Film Awards.

About the Jnanpith Award

- Established in 1961 and first presented in 1965, the Jnanpith Award is regarded as India's highest and oldest literary honour.
- Annually presented by Bharatiya Jnanpith, the prestigious award celebrates outstanding contributions in Indian literature in English and various Indian languages.
- It is important to note that only Indian citizens are eligible for this nonposthumous award.
- Awardees receive a generous cash prize of Rs 11 lakh, a statue of Vagdevi/Saraswati symbolising wisdom and knowledge, and a citation acknowledging their literary prowess.

Future Projection

- Subsequent to the 58th Jnanpith Award, Vinod Kumar Shukla has been announced as the recipient of the 59th Jnanpith Award (2024), making him the first writer from Chhattisgarh to be bestowed with this honour.

The Gallantry Awards 2025: Honouring Bravery

Introduction

- The Gallantry Awards are presented to acknowledge and commend the extraordinary bravery shown by servicemen in the face of adversary.
- The President of India handed out the Gallantry Awards 2025 on the eve of the 76th Republic Day.
- These awards encompassed 6 Kirti Chakras (4 posthumous) and 33 Shaurya Chakras (7 posthumous) to officers from the Indian Armed Forces, Central Armed Police Forces, and State/UT Police.

About Gallantry Awards

- Gallantry Awards are rewards given to individuals who have demonstrated immense courage, outstanding bravery, and complete disregard for personal safety while performing their duty.
- They are announced biannually on Republic Day and Independence Day.

The Types of Gallantry Awards

- Gallantry Awards are divided into two categories: those awarded in the face of the enemy, and those given for bravery outside of combat.

Gallantry Awards in the Face of the Enemy

- Param Vir Chakra (PVC) for most conspicuous daring or an exceptional act of gallantry or selfsacrifice in the presence of the enemy. The decoration features a "Indra's Vajra" embossed in the middle.
- Mahavir Chakra (MVC) is awarded for acts of gallantry

in the presence of the enemy. The medal showcases a gilded State Emblem in the centre of a heraldic star.

- Vir Chakra is honoured for acts of bravery when confronting the enemy either on land, at sea, or in the air. The medal features a Chakra at its centre with a gilded State Emblem.

Gallantry Awards Other than in the Face of the Enemy

- These awards include the Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra, and Shaurya Chakra. All these medals feature a replica of their respective Chakra in the centre surrounded by a lotus wreath.

Additional Information

- For recognising service personnel who demonstrate courage and bravery in similar acts more than once, they are honoured with a Bar to the Chakra.
- Both the Chakra and the Bar to the Chakra may be awarded posthumously, serving as an enduring recognition of the recipient's bravery and sacrifice.

Heart Lamp Sweeps 2025 International Booker Prize

Introduction and Synopsis

- "Heart Lamp," a collection of short stories by Indian author Banu Mushtaq, has broken ground as the first Kannada work to win the prestigious International Booker Prize 2025.
- This collection, translated into English by Deepa Bhasthi, represents a landmark achievement for regional literature from India.
- The stories within Heart Lamp spotlight the struggles endured by women under the strong hand of patriarchy.
- It artistically mirrors the essence of the Bandaya Sahitya movement, widely echoing the global issues of gender discrimination.

Literature and Social Movement

- The Bandaya movement, launched in the 1970s, fuelled both literary and social activism focussed on women's rights and Dalit issues.
- This movement significantly impacted politics and literature across Karnataka, India's hightech hub and the home of Heart Lamp's author, inculcating powerful dialogue about women's struggles and inequalities.
- Heart Lamp effectively captures the spirit of this movement, highlighting the author's ability to blend compelling narratives with prevailing sociopolitical themes.

International Booker Prize Overview

- Formerly acknowledged as the Man Booker International Prize, the International Booker Prize is a revered annual award given to translated works of fiction.
- It honours the finest longform works or short story collections that have been published in the UK or Ireland.
- Administered by the Booker Prize Foundation in the UK, this award celebrates not only the authors but also the translators who bring these stories to the English-speaking world.
- The award comes with a hefty prize money of 50,000 GBP, distributed equally between the author and the translator. In addition, each shortlisted author and translator receives a further prize of 2,500 GBP.

Significance and Impact

- Heart Lamp's triumph at the International Booker Prize 2025 reflects the rising global recognition for Indian regional literature.
- Its keynote themes offer insights into the ongoing struggles of women under patriarchal structures, making it a pertinent read for today's global audience.
- This win not only puts the spotlight on Kannada literature but also stands as a tribute to the Bandaya Sahitya movement, showcasing its influential role in shaping literature and politics across India.
- Furthermore, it signifies the increasing inclusivity in the world of literature honouring translated works, allowing nonEnglish speaking narratives to gain global attention.

Global Report on Food Crises 2025: Deepening Global Food Insecurity

Introduction and About

- The Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) 2025 reveals an increase in acute hunger, affecting 295 million people across 53 countries.
- The report is compiled by the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) and the Food Security Information Network (FSIN).
- It offers comprehensive analysis of acute food insecurity and nutrition crisis (malnutrition) worldwide.

Drivers of Food Insecurity as per GRFC 2025 Report

- The report identifies conflicts and displacement as key drivers of food insecurity, affecting 139.8 million people in 20 countries significantly.
- Economic disruptions and severe climate events also contribute to food crises and displacement of populations.
- Flawed governance, funding cuts, and economic instability exacerbate hunger and malnutrition, hindering the fight against acute hunger.

Socio Economic Implications

- The report highlights the negative implications of food crises on global development, especially in developing countries, increasing poverty and leading to the loss of human capital.
- Food shortages often lead to social instability whilst disproportionately affecting women and children.
- The educational systems are also impaired due to high dropout rates caused by hunger and the need to support household incomes.

Addressing Food Insecurity and Nutrition Crises

- The report outlines various strategies to address this growing issue:
- Establishing strong nutrition information systems to anticipate and address needs.
- Developing integrated food security and nutrition systems at country and regional levels.
- Increasing investment in emergency agricultural aid.
- Adopting climate resilient farming practices and

linking food security with peace building.
- Transforming Agrifood systems by investing in agriculture to improve diet affordability, food availability, and supply chains.

Conclusion

- The GFRS 2025 report depicts a severe global hunger crisis fuelled by several factors like conflict, climate change, and economic instability.
- With millions of people experiencing acute food insecurity and funding cuts threatening aid, urgent actions like the promotion of climate resilient agriculture and strengthening nutrition programmes are necessary to mitigate the crisis.

16th Asiatic Lion Census 2025 and its Key Findings

Introduction and Overview

- The 16th Asiatic Lion Census 2025 reveals an impressive increase in the population of the Asiatic lion (Panthera leo persica) in Gujarat, surging from 674 to 891 in five years.
- The increase is attributed to the various conservation initiatives conducted under Project Lion, a scheme introduced in 2020 aimed at securing the future of Asiatic lions.

Key Findings of the Census

- The total population recorded is 891, indicating a 32.2% rise as compared to the 674 lions recorded in the 15th census of 2020.
- 384 lions live inside protected forests and sanctuary areas while the count of lions in nonforested areas stands at 507, rising from 340 in 2020.
- 44.22% of the lion population now live outside the traditional protected habitats.
- Gir National Park, Gir Wildlife Sanctuary, and Pania Wildlife Sanctuary are home to 394 lions.
- Amreli district counts the most lions at 257, while the population at Mityala Wildlife Sanctuary doubled to 32.
- Barda Wildlife Sanctuary near Porbandar recorded its first lion population of 17 since 1879.
- New satellite populations have been identified around Jetpur and BabraJasdan.

Female Lion Population and Project Lion

- A total of 330 adult female lions were recorded, representing a 27% rise from the last census, which implies a robust potential for continued population growth.
- Project Lion, announced in 2020, has been pivotal in restoring habitats, fortifying the prey base, and reducing conflicts, all in support of the conservation of the Asiatic lion.

Census Methodology & Technologies Used

- The 2025 census was conducted using direct beat verification. The area was split into regions, zones, and subzones with designated officials and volunteers for a systematic survey.
- Advanced technologies such as Global Positioning System-based tracking, automated sensor grid and Geographic Information System (GIS)based realtime monitoring have greatly aided in lion conservation.

IUCN Green Status Assessment

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) released its first Green Status Assessment for lions in 2025 to provide a global standard for species recovery and conservation impact.
- Unlike the IUCN Red List that emphasises on extinction risk, the Green Status focuses on recovery potential and required conservation efforts. Lions have been placed in the category of 'Largely Depleted'.

WMO Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update 20252029 Overview and Impact

Introduction and Summary

- This global report has been released by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- The report warns that Earth's average temperature is likely to exceed 1.5°C above preindustrial levels between 2025 and 2029.
- The significant content of the report focuses on the annual global average temperature, regional climate projections, and the Paris Agreement Threshold.

Key Findings from WMO Report

- WMO projects a high probability of the Earth's annual global average temperature during 20252029 being well within the 1.2°C to 1.9°C range above the 1850–1900 preindustrial average.
- A 70% chance exists for this fiveyear average temperature to exceed the critical 1.5°C threshold.
- An 86% likelihood remains for at least one year within 20252029 to surpass the 1.5°C limit, with an 80% chance for one of these years to beat 2024, currently the hottest year on record.

Regional Climate Projections

- South Asia: Conditions may remain wetter than average.
- Amazon: Likely to face drierthanaverage conditions.
- Arctic: Expected to get warmer – 2.4°C above normal, 3.5 times the global average.

Paris Agreement Threshold and Policy Implications

- The year 2024 marked the first time temperatures exceeded 1.5°C, albeit temporarily.
- A long term (20–30 years) exceedance would mean failure to meet the Paris Agreement.
- As of now, 180 out of 195 UNFCCC countries have not submitted their updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the period 2031–2035.
- The WMO emphasises the importance of continuous climate monitoring to guide decisionmaking and enhance adaptation efforts.

About the World Meteorological Organization

- The WMO, including India, consists of 192 member states and territories.
- Its origin lays in the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), established after the 1873 Vienna International Meteorological Congress.
- In 1950, the IMO formally transitioned to the WMO, becoming a United Nations' specialised agency for

meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology, and connected geophysical sciences.

Key International Conventions to Limit Global Warming

- Kyoto Protocol (1997): Aimed to curtail the emission of greenhouse gases.
- Paris Agreement (2015): Sought to cap global temperature rise to well under 2°C above preindustrial levels, striving to keep the increase to 1.5°C.
- Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26) (2021): Advocated global net zero emissions by midcentury to maintain 1.5°C of warming within reach.
- Sharm ElSheikh Plan (COP27) (2022): Promoted climate justice, emphasised adaptation, and resolved the 1.5°C goal.
- Global Stocktake (COP28) (2023): Governments pledged to enhance their 2025 climate commitments to align with the approved 1.5°C goal, covering all sectors and greenhouse gases.

NATIONAL FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AWARDS 2025

Introduction and About

- The National Florence Nightingale Awards 2025 were presented by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- These prestigious national awards are given in recognition of exceptional nursing professionals who have delivered meritorious services in India.
- The awards encompass various fields including nursing, midwifery, maternal care, immunisation, and rural outreach.
- They were established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, in 1973, as a way to pay tribute to Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

Key Features of the Award

- The award winners receive a cash prize of ₹1,00,000, along with a medal and Certificate of Merit.
- It is open to Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM), Staff Nurses, Lady Health Visitors (LHV), and others involved in public health services.
- Nominations for the award are invited from the state governments, union territories, and healthcare institutions.
- The selection process involves a detailed evaluation by expert panels from the health sector, based on service record, dedication, innovation, and contribution to public health.

Awardees 2025

- The 2025 awards recognised the exceptional work of nurses from 15 states and union territories, including Delhi, Karnataka, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Among the awardees were the Devrani sisters from Uttarakhand, known for their fourdecadelong service to the profession.
- The list includes ANMs like Smt. Reba Rani Sarkar from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and SmtValiveti Subhavathi from Andhra Pradesh. Other recognitions went to LHVs, Staff Nurses and public health servants from various states and union territories.

Significance of the Awards

- The National Florence Nightingale Awards play a crucial role in promoting excellence in the healthcare sector, as they incentivise frontline workers to strive for the best.
- The awards further highlight the importance of the nursing profession in public health, maternal care, immunization, and rural outreach in India.
- These Awards are designed to foster a spirit of service, empathy, and dedication, especially in settings with limited resources.
- They also steer more young individuals towards viewing nursing as a noble profession pivotal to the resilience of India's health system.

WORLD HEALTH SCHEMES AND INITIATIVE

Organization's First Ever Pandemic Agreement

Introduction and About

- Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) unanimously adopted the world's first Pandemic Agreement at the 78th World Health Assembly in 2024.
- This decision comes after over three years of negotiations, initiated in response to the COVID19 pandemic.
- It's a legally binding agreement that aims to bolster global preparedness, response, and fairness in addressing future pandemics.
- The full implementation of this agreement awaits the finalisation of key mechanisms by May 2026, after which it needs ratification by at least 60 countries to become effective.

Understanding the World Health Assembly (WHA)

- The WHA is the decisionmaking body of the WHO, consisting of delegates from all WHO Member States.
- It yearly assembly sets policies and priorities, appoints the WHO director general, approves budgets and work programmes, and adopts international treaties and agreements under Article 19 of the WHO Constitution.
- The assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.

Noteworthy Achievements of the WHA

- Adoption of the International Health Regulations, a legal framework for global health security.
- Eradication of Smallpox declared by the WHA in 1980.
- Launched the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2003, the first international health treaty.

- Initiation of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework in 2011.
- Adoption of the unprecedented WHO Pandemic Agreement in 2025.

Recent Areas of Focus

- The assembly has recently been focused on COVID19 response and pandemic preparedness, Universal Health Coverage, Antimicrobial resistance, health equity and access to essential medicines, as well as noncommunicable diseases and mental health.

Key Highlights of WHO Pandemic Agreement

- The legal framework and historical significance of the pandemic agreement is essential as it is only the second international legal agreement under Article 19 of the WHO Constitution, after the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2003.
- This agreement aims to strengthen global pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. It foregrounds the principles of equity, solidarity, transparency, and scientific evidence while respecting the sovereign rights of states.
- The agreement marks a milestone in global health governance and pandemic resilience.

AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME (ABSS)

Introduction and Overview

- The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) is an initiative by the Indian government to modernise over 1,300 railway stations across the country.
- The scheme is focused on enhancing passenger amenities and incorporating elements of regional architectural styles.
- An estimated ₹1,100 crore has been allocated for the redevelopment of these stations, with PM Narendra Modi inaugurating 103 such redeveloped stations across 18 states and union territories.

Current Developments under ABSS

- PM Narendra Modi recently inaugurated 103 redeveloped railway stations virtually.
- These stations are located across 18 states and union territories, covering 86 districts, and include locations such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.
- The redevelopment of these stations was completed at a cost of around ₹1,100 crore.

PM Modi's Rajasthan Visit and New Developments

- During PM Modi's visit to Rajasthan, he flagged off a new express train between Bikaner and Mumbai.
- Additionally, he inaugurated the newly redeveloped Deshnok station.

Importance of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme

- The ABSS initiative reflects the government's commitment to enhancing passenger convenience and experience.
- By incorporating elements of regional architectural styles, the scheme also promotes regional culture and heritage.
- The scheme is a step towards modernising India's railway infrastructure, which is crucial for the country's economic growth and development.

INDIA'S FIRST VISTADOME JUNGLE SAFARI TRAIN

Introduction and Current News

- India's first Vistadome jungle safari train was launched on May 26, 2025.
- The service links Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, promoting ecotourism and raising conservation awareness.

Key Highlights of the Safari Train Launch

- The initiative aims to blend ecotourism, wildlife education, and railbased travel.
- This service has been launched under the "One Destination, Three Forests" scheme by the Uttar Pradesh EcoTourism Board.
- The prime goal of this venture is to offer an ecoluxury travel experience, raising biodiversity awareness and supporting local employment.

About Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

- Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, located on the IndoNepal border in LakhimpurKheri, Uttar Pradesh,
- comprises Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuaries, and other forest areas.
- This region represents the TaraiBhabar ecosystem of the upper Gangetic plains.
- Sharda River, Geruwa River, Suheli and Mohana Streams, which are tributaries of the Ghagra River, pass through this area.
- The biodiversity in this reserve is dominated by North Indian Moist Deciduous forests, with Sal as the primary species.

About Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS)

- KWS is located in the Upper Gangetic plain, Uttar Pradesh.
- Since 1987, it has formed a part of the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger, along with Kishanpur and Dudhwa National Park.
- The sanctuary covers 400.09 sq. km, forming part of the reserve's core zone.
- It acts as a key wildlife corridor between Dudhwa, Kishanpur, and Bardia National Park in Nepal.

Ecosystem and Biodiversity of KWS

- KWS is a Terai landscape rich with Sal and Teak forests, grasslands, swamps, and wetlands.
- It hosts endangered species like the Tiger, Gharial, Rhino, Swamp Deer, Hispid Hare, Bengal Florican, and vultures.
- The Gairwa River present here is a protected habitat for Mugger and Gharial.
- The area witnesses a significant population of rare turtles, freshwater fish, and the Gangetic dolphin in their natural habitat.-

SCHEMES & INITIATIVE

Operation Hawk An AntiCybercrime Initiative by CBI

Introduction to Operation Hawk

- Operation Hawk is a dedicated anticybercrime mission launched by India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2025.
- The objective of the operation is to identify and prosecute individuals engaged in online child sexual exploitation, particularly those with international digital footprints.
- This initiative was launched by the International Operations Division of the CBI.

Aims of Operation Hawk

- Operation Hawk aims to dismantle organised cyber networks that target minors online.
- It seeks to strengthen international collaboration in combating cyber pedophilia and child abuse.
- The operation also ensures a swift response to foreign complaints involving Indian citizens.
- Enhancing digital forensics and crossborder evidence collection is another primary objective of Operation Hawk.

Key Features of Operation Hawk

- Operation Hawk collaborates with international agencies such as the FBI, Interpol and local cybersecurity units to ensure crossborder coordination.
- The operation is specifically focused on dealing with child sexual abuse material (CSAM) trafficking, sexual extortion, commonly known as sextortion and intimidation of minors.
- It involves robust investigation techniques such as multilocation raids, digital seizures, and legal action under the Indian Penal Code, IT Act, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.
- The strategy for Operation Hawk is based on precedents set by earlier antiCSAM operations carried out by the CBI.

History of Similar Operations by CBI

- CBI has previously conducted other operations to target cybercrime. Operation CARBON, launched in 2021, targeted dark web users sharing CSAM across global platforms.
- Operation MEGH CHAKRA was executed in 2022. Based on inputs from Interpol, it included panIndia raids, resulting in a large-scale digital seizure and multiple arrests.

Operation Hawk in Recent News

- The operation gained attention when the CBI arrested two individuals from Mumbai and Delhi under Operation Hawk. These arrests mark a significant stride in targeting international cybercrime networks involved in online child sexual exploitation.

Inauguration of Vizhinjam International Seaport by Prime Minister

Introduction and Overview

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Vizhinjam International Seaport (VIS) in Kerala, a significant development for India's maritime infrastructure.
- Vizhinjam International Seaport is India's first deepwater transshipment port designed specifically for processing container and multipurpose cargo.
- The seaport is developed under the PublicPrivate Partnership (PPP) model, following the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) method.

Geographical Significance and Technological Advancements

- VIS's location is strategic as it is just 10 nautical miles away from major international shipping routes connecting Europe, the Persian Gulf, and the Far East which enhances its accessibility for large vessels.
- Technologically, Vizhinjam seaport stands as India's first semiautomated port, facilitated with an AIpowered control room and the country's first Indigenous Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMS).
- The VTMS enhances the port's capacity to handle large ships, optimises traffic flow and reduces vessel turnaround times by providing realtime updates.

Economic Impact and Future Developments

- The primary objective of VIS is to reduce India's economic dependence on international facilities. Currently, about 75% of transshipment cargo is processed abroad.
- Vizhinjam port's capacity to handle transshipment domestically can potentially save India approximately USD 200220 million in annual revenue loss.
- Future development plans for Vizhinjam port includes phases two and three, which would boost the port's capacity to 3 million TEUs annually by 2028 from the current 1 million TEUs.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and the Restructured WeatherBased Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)

- General Understanding of PMFBY and RWBCIS
- PMFBY and RWBCIS are centrally administered schemes initiated in 2016 to provide financial protection to farmers in India against crop losses.
- As per the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, approximately 97% of all claims under these two schemes have been settled throughout India. Complete claim settlement has been achieved in Goa, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu.

Detailed Insight into PMFBY

- PMFBY offers insurance against crop losses due to natural calamities, pests, or diseases.
- It became the world's largest crop insurance scheme in terms of the number of farmers enrolled and land area covered by 2023–24.
- Eligibility extends to all farmers, including

sharecroppers and tenant farmers, growing notified crops in notified areas.

- The scheme offers coverage against natural disasters, pest infestations and diseases, postharvest losses on an individual farm basis, and localised calamities.
- It also provides indemnification for 'Prevented Sowing' on a notified area basis.
- Farmers have to pay affordable premiums, with farmers in the Northeast, Jammu & Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh receiving full government subsidies.
- Technological integration is prominent in the scheme through the use of satellite imagery, drones, and other digitised tools for estimation, dispute resolution, and assessment purposes.
- Under PMFBY, the aim is to process claims within two months of harvest, offering timely financial support to farmers and potentially preventing them from falling into financial distress.

Knowledge on RWBCIS

- The primary objective of launching RWBCIS was to secure farmers from financial losses due to unfavourable weather conditions.
- This scheme offers compensation based on deviations from predefined weather indicators, such as rainfall, temperature, humidity, and wind speed, which serve as proxies for crop loss without necessitating fieldlevel evaluations.

Comparing PMFBY and RWBCIS

- While both schemes are aimed at protecting farmers against crop losses, they work on different principles and cover different types of risks.
- PMFBY provides compensation based on actual crop loss assessments caused by natural disasters, pests, or diseases, whereas RWBCIS provides compensation based on deviations in weather indicators.

Recent Developments and Statistics

- According to a recent report, all claims under PMFBY and RWBCIS have been fully settled in Goa, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu.
- Other states like Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, and Sikkim have reported settlement rates ranging from 51% to 91%.
- The success of these schemes highlights the government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of farmers and its ability to meet insurance claim settlements promptly and efficiently.

Operation Sankalp

Introduction and About

- Operation Sankalp is an extensive antiNaxal operation conducted at the border between Chhattisgarh and Telangana.
- The operation is currently in its third week, with reported casualties on the Maoist side and strategic advantages for the security forces.
- The mission was launched by combined forces from Chhattisgarh Police, Telangana Police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and CoBRA.
- The area of operation spans from Karregutta hills and Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh to Mulugu district in Telangana.

Objective of Operation

- The primary goals of Operation Sankalp are to flush out top Maoist leaders, especially Battalion 1 of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army, which is the armed wing of CPIMaoist.
- In addition, the operation aims to dismantle fortified hideouts of the Maoists and destroy their bases and bunkers used for logistics supply.

Key Features and Strategies

- The operation involves a large-scale troop mobilisation comprising over 24,000 personnel from various security forces including Indian Air Force.
- It adopts an approach of precision strikes, utilising air surveillance and intelligence-based operations in tough terrains.
- Significant recoveries have been made to date, including over 1,000 kg of explosives, ration stockpiles, detonators, medical kits, and electronic equipment from the Maoist hideouts.

Strategic Significance

- Operation Sankalp marks the largest interstate operation in history and embodies unprecedented joint coordination between central and state forces.
- By targeting the top leadership, the operation seeks to disrupt the Maoist chain of command within the core forest zones.
- The operation also serves to enhance civil governance by clearing a path for infrastructure development and welfare initiatives in the Naxal affected tribal belts.

Impact on National Security

- Execution of Operation Sankalp aligns with the Centre's policy of zero tolerance towards Left Wing Extremism, thereby strengthening national security.
- By affirming state dominance in areas previously considered inaccessible, the operation plays a crucial role in restoring civilian confidence and improving the morale of the security forces.

The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India (GHCI)

Introduction and Overview

- The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India (GHCI) is an initiative launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) as part of the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM).
- The main aim is to create a solid framework for certifying green hydrogen production and to ensure transparency, traceability, and credibility in the market.

Purpose and Goals

- The objective of the scheme is to promote a Green Hydrogen market in India that is sourced from renewables in order to reduce carbon emissions.
- It also aims to drive exports and encourage energy-intensive sectors to adopt the fuel.
- Designated international port cities including Kandla, Paradip, and Tuticorin have been selected as primary centres for the production of green hydrogen for export.
- By implementing this scheme, it will help in curtailing greenwashing, a practice where companies falsely or exaggeratedly depict themselves as ecofriendly.

Certification Process

- The certification process will be verified by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) Accredited Carbon Verification (ACV) Agency in order to ensure compliance.
- The certificate awarded is nontransferable and nontradeable and cannot be utilised to claim emission reduction credits.
- BEE's Announcement and Applicability of the Scheme
- The BEE also announced an offset mechanism for hard-to-debate sectors (such as cement), allowing them to earn and trade credit by using green hydrogen under Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS).
- The scheme applies solely to the production of green hydrogen via electrolysis or conversion of biomass.

Contribution to Sustainable Development

- The certification scheme paves way for a sustainable future, strongly aligning with global efforts in combatting detrimental climate change effects.
- Boosting sectors to adopt green hydrogen also promotes the broad transition towards renewable energy sources.
- Overall, India's GHCI introduces a much needed policy backing for the promotion of green hydrogen use and production across the nation.

AI Enabled Haryana Water Resource Atlas 2025

Introduction and About

- The Haryana government has rolled out the Haryana Water Resource Atlas 2025, a state of the art, AI driven geospatial platform.
- This platform is targeted at monitoring, managing, and conserving the state's receding water reserves.

Functionality and Features

- The platform equips realtime insight into multiple key water metrics like groundwater level, aquifers, surface water bodies, recharge zones, and canal systems.
- Additionally, comprehensive information on cropping patterns is also available.
- It effectively amalgamates data from different sources comprising satellite data, GPS surveys, IMD meteorological inputs, and data from Central Groundwater Board (CGWB), Irrigation, and Agriculture Departments.

Application and Importance

- This atlas brings realtime data support to the fore, enhancing the effectiveness of water conservation drives, sustainable farming practices, and infrastructure planning.
- AI is significantly interweaving into India's water management strategies.
- Adding to the list of recent advancements, an AIbased prediction model to detect Arsenic pollution in drinking water has been fabricated by researchers at IIT Kharagpur.

Current Scenario and Future Prospects

- This launch underscores the state's commitment to implementing cutting-edge technologies to address environmental challenges.
- With the successful execution reaffirming the potential of the AI foundation in environmental conservation, the prospects look promising for future endeavours in this direction.
- Given the current pressures on water resources and the urgency to adopt effective conservation strategies, the integration of AI could produce game changing results for water management in India.

New Digital Platforms Introduced by Department of Posts

Introduction and Overview

- The Department of Posts (DoP) has rolled out two digital platforms: 'Know Your DIGIPIN' and 'Know Your PIN Code'.
- Part of modernising India's address system and geospatial governance, these platforms are launched under the framework of the National Geospatial Policy 2022.

Know Your DIGIPIN

- DIGIPIN, meaning Digital Postal Index Number, is an opensource, geocoded, gridbased digital addressing system.
- Developed to aid exact location identification, it uses latitude and longitude coordinates.
- DIGIPIN ties up addresses to precise latitude longitude coordinates, which enables high resolution geospatial identification.
- It offers AddressasaService (AaaS) providing secure, standardised digital address solutions.
- It utilizes Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to enhance logistics, emergency response, and digital governance.
- Provides digital address access in remote and underserved areas.

Know Your PIN Code

- Digitally determines boundaries of over 150,000 PIN Codes.
- Enhances location accuracy by enabling geofencing of PIN zones.
- Users can find the correct PIN Code using realtime GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) location data.
- Contains a public feedback system for optimising the PIN Code database.
- Boosts delivery networks, emergency services, and postal logistics, especially catering to ecommerce and rural areas.

Significance and Impact

- These digital platforms offer a considerable leap in India's geospatial governance capabilities.
- They cater to a crucial need for accurate geolocation data in various sectors, including logistics, governance, emergency response, and ecommerce.
- The 'Know Your PIN Code' system enhances postal services, specifically in underserved or rural areas.
- The platforms align with the National Geospatial Policy 2022, providing a comprehensive geospatial database for improved accuracy and efficient management of geospatial resources.

Sagar Mein Samman Initiative

Introduction

- The Sagar Mein Samman (SMS) initiative is a project initiated by the Government of India, introduced on the International Day for Women in Maritime.
- The primary focus of the programme is the advancement of women's participation in the shipping industry, in alignment with India's aspirations of becoming a leading global maritime power.

Recognition and Observance

- The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) acknowledges the significance of women in maritime by celebrating the International Day for Women in Maritime annually on 18th May.
- The theme for the year 2025 has been established as "An Ocean of Opportunities for Women", reflecting the growth opportunities for women in the maritime sector.

About Sagar Mein Samman

- The core purpose of the SMS initiative is to create a maritime workforce that is balanced in terms of gender.
- It further aims at enhancing safety measures, skill development, leadership opportunities, and equal opportunities for women involved in maritime operations.
- The programme is designed to align with the broader vision of UN SDG5, which endorses gender equality, and the IMO mission that encourages greater gender inclusion.

Impact and Targets

- India experienced a remarkable 649% increase in women seafarers, growing from 341 in 2014 to 2,557 in 2024.
- The initiative has already provided financial assistance to nearly 3,000 women.
- The SMS programme targets to augment the representation of women in technical maritime roles to 12% by 2030.

Curating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Agenda

- The SMS initiative is consistent with India's DEI agenda and the Maritime India Vision 2030, covering several areas such as training, planning, research, governance, and multiple other facets of operation outreach.

India's Initiatives in the Maritime Sector

- Additional key initiatives in the maritime sector include the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) and the Maritime Amritkaal Vision 2047, which aspire to further promote India's maritime sector.

KVIC's Honey Mission and Importance of Beekeeping

Introduction to KVIC's Honey Mission

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) initiated the Honey Mission in the fiscal year of 201718.
- The mission falls under the umbrella of the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and encourages beekeeping.
- The primary objective of the Honey Mission is to create self-employment opportunities in rural and remote areas.

World Bee Day Celebrations 2025

- World Bee Day, established by the UN in 2018, is observed on 20th May every year.
- In 2025, KVIC joined in the global celebrations of World Bee Day with the theme "Bee inspired by nature to nourish us all."
- The celebration aimed to emphasise the transformative impact of the Honey Mission and the pivotal role of bees in maintaining the ecosystem and human health.

Achievements and Impact of Honey Mission

- The KVIC has distributed more than 2.29 lakh bee boxes till 2025.
- The distribution of these boxes has resulted in the production of 20,000 metric tonnes of honey.
- The honey production has generated an income of Rs 325 crore for the beekeepers.
- In the fiscal year of 202425, KVIC reported that honey exports amounted to Rs 25 crore.

Other Initiatives to Enhance Beekeeping

- Other initiatives complementing the Honey Mission include the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) and the National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM).
- SFURTI and NBHM focus on supporting traditional beekeepers by forming clusters and offering training along with modern machinery for sustainable employment.
- Furthermore, NBHM aims to realise the vision of a 'Sweet Revolution' as a part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan, thereby reinforcing the nation's selfreliance drive.

Importance of Beekeeping

- Beekeeping offers numerous benefits, from supplementing income to enhancing agricultural productivity via pollination.
- Honey bees contribute to maintaining balance and harmony in nature by assisting in the pollination process.
- Keeping bees allows for the sustainable harvesting of honey and other bee products, thus supporting biodiversity and ecological health.
- In India, honey also holds significant medicinal and cultural value, extending beyond its business potential.

eZero FIR Initiative in India

Introduction and About

- The eZero FIR is a pilot project launched by the Union Home Minister, under the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- This initiative is designed to enhance the efficiency in investigating cyber financial frauds, ultimately contributing to a Cyber Secure Bharat vision.
- It is essentially an electronic version of the traditional Zero FIR, activated under Section 173(1) and 1(ii) of the BNSS.

Understanding Zero FIR

- A Zero FIR can be lodged at any police station, irrespective of its jurisdiction, for a cognisable offence.
- After filing, it is then transferred to the appropriate jurisdiction for official investigation.

Key Features of eZero FIR

- Automatic FIR Registration: Any cyber financial fraud complaint that crosses Rs 10 lakh, reported via the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) or the Helpline 1930, will be automatically escalated to Zero FIR.
- Complainants have a 3day window to visit the targeted police station to get the Zero FIR converted into a conventional FIR.
- Systems Integration: It connects three systems the I4C's NCRP system, the Delhi Police's eFIR system, and the NCRB's Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) into a singular, amalgamated cybercrime reporting and investigation framework.

FIR (First Information Report)

- An FIR signifies the initial formal report of a cognisable offence (an offence where the police has the authority to arrest without a warrant and begin investigation without magistrate approval), submitted by an individual and documented by the police.
- The FIR initiates the criminal justice process.
- FIRs are administered under Section 173 of the BNSS, 2023.

eZero FIR and Significance

- The eZero FIR brings forward a significant revolution in the reporting of cyber financial frauds in India, providing a streamlined, efficient, and unified framework for reporting and investigating such crimes.
- The initiative furthers India's commitment to creating a cybersecure environment, thereby enhancing trust in digitisation and online transactions.
- By including concepts like automatic FIR registration and system integration, it ensures a faster and more effective response time to the crimes reported, leading to prompt actions and minimising potential losses.

SCIENCE AND TECH

India's First GenomeEdited Rice Varieties: DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) and Pusa DST Rice 1

Introduction

- India has recently unveiled its first genome-edited rice varieties: DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) and Pusa DST Rice 1.
- These varieties of rice were developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) utilising cutting-edge genome editing technology, CRISPRCas9.
- This marks a significant milestone in the field of agricultural development and food security in India.

About DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala)

- The DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala) is a rice variety pioneered by ICARIndian Institute of Rice Research in Hyderabad.
- This variety is based upon the popular Samba Mahsuri (BPT 5204) variety.

Features of DRR Dhan 100 (Kamala)

- It promises 19% more yield and matures approximately 20 days earlier than other varieties, taking only 130 days.
- It possesses a firm stem that prevents the plant from falling, allowing significant water conservation – around 7,500 million cubic meters.
- Its genome has been edited to modify the CKX2 (Gn1a) gene, a change that supports larger grain production per plant.
- It emits comparatively less methane due to its quicker growing speed, making it environmentally friendly.

About Pusa DST Rice 1

- The Pusa DST Rice 1 is another groundbreaking rice variety formulated by ICARIndian Agricultural Research Institute in New Delhi.
- It uses the MTU 1010 variety as its foundation.

Features of Pusa DST Rice 1

- This variety has been genomeedited to enhance its tolerance towards drought and salinity by targeting the DST gene.
- It yields up to 30.4% more in challenging soil conditions.
- It doesn't contain any foreign DNA and is genomeedited using the SDN1 method, as such it doesn't fall under the stringent regulations for Genetically Modified Organisms.

Significance of GenomeEdited Rice Varieties

- The introduction of these genomeedited rice varieties can be a gamechanger for the agricultural sector in India.
- Their improved yield and resilience to challenging environmental conditions can increase food security in regions facing water scarcity and soil degradation.
- Additionally, the decrease in methane emissions from these varieties can contribute to achieving sustainability goals.

LICONN(LightMicroscopy Based Connectomics): A new technique for nanoscale brain mapping

Introduction and Overview

- LICONN LightMicroscopyBased Connectomics is a groundbreaking imaging technique developed by scientists for nanoscale brain mapping using light microscopes.
- Analytically, it revolves around developing neuronal connections maps at the synapse level.
- The technique is an amalgamation of various disciplines involving hydrogel expansion, protein staining, and AIbased segmentation.

Key Features of LICONN

- LICONN contains the capability of expanding brain tissues up to 16 times their original size using

specialised hydrogels.
- Employs the use of fluorescent tagging for highlighting molecular features and advanced deep learning techniques for neural segmentation.
- Notably, the technique can achieve nanoscale resolution with diffraction-limited light microscopy, a feat earlier achievable only through electron microscopy.

Significance and Applications of LICONN
- Plays a crucial role in enabling synapselevel connectome mapping, a fundamental part of neuroscientific research.
- Facilitates detailed molecular characterisation of neural pathways, offering novel insights into the intricacies of brain functioning.
- With its wide range of applications, LICONN can be leveraged in brain disorder research, innovative drug development, and comprehensive understanding of memory processing.

Current Relevance of LICONN
- The development of LICONN stands as a significant leap forward in the field of neuroscience, offering new possibilities in understanding the brain's complex functionalities.
- The technique stands as a symbol of scientific advancement, representing the intersection of various fields such as biochemistry, neurology, and artificial intelligence.
- Given the global burden of neurological disorders and the perpetual quest for superior therapeutic solutions, LICONN's potential for usage in brain disorder research and drug development positions it in a prominent limelight.

Asteroid 2024 YR4

Introduction and Description
- Asteroid 2024 YR4, often known simply as YR4, was discovered in December 2024 by the ATLAS telescope based in Chile.
- YR4 is classified as a NearEarth Object (NEO), meaning it has a solar orbit that brings it close to Earth at a distance of approximately 1.3 Astronomical Units (AU) from the Sun. One AU is the average distance between the Earth and the Sun, roughly 93 million miles.
- The asteroid is approximately 65 meters in width, making it equivalent in size to a tenstorey building.

Potential Impact and Risk Assessment
- YR4 initially triggered the highest ever impact alert by NASA in February 2025 due to an initial estimated 3.1% chance of colliding with Earth. This estimate has since been revised to negligible.
- However, projections were updated revealing a 3.8% chance of collision with the Moon on December 22, 2032. Regardless, there is a significant 96.2% chance that the asteroid will miss.
- If the asteroid did strike, it could potentially create an impact crater ranging from 500 to 2,000 meters and release energy 340 times greater than that of the Hiroshima bomb.

Scientific and Strategic Importance
- YR4's near approach to the Earth underscores both the importance of automated detection and early warning systems for Near Earth Objects, and also the constant risk posed by small-to-medium-sized asteroids. This is analogous to the Chelyabinsk event in 2013, where an asteroid entered Earth's atmosphere undetected.
- If the asteroid did happen to strike the moon's near side, it would provide an observational opportunity for spacecraft like Chandrayaan2 to study the impact flash.
- Public awareness of asteroids and their potential risks is vital, with experts asserting that an asteroid collision is the only natural disaster that could potentially be prevented with enough forewarning. The asteroid YR4 thus offers a proactive context to raise public awareness about the possibility and prevention of such celestial events.

India's First GeneEdited Sheep: A Step towards Advancements in Genomic Science

Introduction and About
- Researchers in Kashmir have developed India's first gene-edited sheep using CRISPRCas9 technology, a breakthrough in biotechnology, and genetic science.
- The project was funded by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- The sheep developed is not transgenic as it contains no foreign DNA.

Why in the News
- The developed sheep is the first ever of its kind in India which used geneediting technology.
- The myostatin gene of a local Merino lamb was edited, resulting in a 30% increase in muscle mass, making it similar to European Texel sheep.

About Gene Editing
- The process of gene editing involves precise modification of the DNA or RNA of the organism.
- Through gene editing, scientists can add, delete, or alter specific gene sequences using specialised tools.

Prominent Gene Editing Methods
- Genome editing is accomplished through several methodologies including CRISPRCas9 and Zinc Finger Nucleases (ZFNs).
- CRISPRCas9 employs guide RNA to steer the Cas9 enzyme to the required DNA sequence where a doublestrand cut is made; subsequent cell repair enables gene disruption or insertion.
- The 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded to Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna for developing this method.
- In contrast, ZFNs are artificial tools consisting of a DNAbinding domain (zinc finger proteins) and a DNAcleaving domain (FokI endonuclease) used to cut and bind specific DNA sequences.
- The Role of Gene Knockout in Genetic Studies
- Gene Knockout is a technique used to disable or delete specific genes to halt protein expression.

- By comparing traits among organisms with and without the 'knockedout' gene, scientists can gain a better understanding of gene function. This technique has been instrumental in studying genetic traits, mapping genomics, and understanding gene therapy.

Importance & Impact on Biotechnology

- The development of geneedited sheep marks a significant milestone in India in the field of biotechnology and genomics, bringing the potential of improved characteristics in livestock.
- This breakthrough opens up new possibilities for gene editing in India, setting a precedent for future genomic projects and research.

ICMR's Launch of the First Stigma Scale for Sickle Cell Disease

Introduction to ICMRSCD Stigma Scale

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has launched the country's first stigma scale for Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) titled ICMRSCD Stigma Scale for India (ISSSI).
- It aims at assessing and addressing the stigma faced by SCD patients and their caregivers.
- ISSSI consists of two components: one for patients (ISSSIPt) and another for caregivers (ISSSICg).

Key Features of ICMRSCD Stigma Scale for India

- The tool is multidimensional, assessing stigma across five areas: familial/reproductive stigma, disclosure issues, illness burden, discrimination, and healthcare stigma.
- It has been developed with sensitivity to India's cultural diversity, having been created in six SCDendemic districts to reflect the country's tribal, regional, and linguistic variation.
- The necessity of a locally relevant tool was due to the unsuitability of three existing SCD stigma scales from Africa and America, which don't cater to India's unique phenotypic, sociocultural, and contextual differences.
- ISSSI is validated and reliable, being psychometrically robust and suitable for clinical use, research, and policy evaluation.

Overview of Sickle Cell Disease

- Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a hereditary blood disorder resulting from a genetic mutation in the haemoglobin gene.
- The disease leads to the creation of abnormal, crescent or sickleshaped red blood cells instead of the typical round shape, which do not move easily through small blood vessels.
- Due to impaired blood circulation, patients can suffer from anaemia, severe pain, organ damage, and a reduced lifespan.

Treatment and Prevalence of Sickle Cell Disease in India

- Treatment options for SCD include gene therapy through bone marrow or stem cell transplantation, blood transfusions, and various medications.
- India has the second largest burden of SCD in the world, ranking third globally in SCD births after Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Over one million individuals are affected by the disease in India, particularly found within the tribal belt spanning Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

Government Actions to Handle Sickle Cell Disease

- Government initiatives such as the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission and the National Health Mission (NHM) 2013 have placed special focus on SCD.
- The National Guidelines for Stem Cell Research 2017 restricts the commercialisation of stem cell therapies outside of clinical trials, except for Bone Marrow Transplantation (BMT) for SCD.
- Under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwDs) Act, 2016, SCD is listed among the 21 disabilities that qualify for reservation benefits.

Understanding the PSLVC61/EOS09 Mission

Introduction And Details About Pslvc61/Eos09 Mission

- This highlights ISRO's PSLVC61 EOS09 mission, featuring the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle's (PSLV) attempt to launch the Earth Observation Satellite09 (EOS09) into its intended subsynchronous polar orbit.
- The mission had a setback as a technical issue in the third stage of the rocket prevented the successful deployment of EOS09.
- This was noted as ISRO's 101st mission, and it was the 63rd time a PSLV was used.
- EOS09 contained equipment crucial for capturing earth's images in all weather conditions, courtesy of its Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload.

Definition And Significance Of Pslv

- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, popularly known as PSLV, is a robust and cost-effective launch vehicle built by ISRO.
- Its functional role is to transport satellites into different orbits such as sunsynchronous, geostationary, and navigation orbits.
- The PSLV is structured into four stages and uses varied propulsion systems to ensure the satellite's successful launch into space.
- It is famed as ISRO's 'workhorse' and has been a critical part of significant ISRO missions over the years, largely due to its versatility and high success rate.
- The PSLV is globally renowned for achieving a world record by launching 104 satellites in a single mission back in 2017.
- It is worth noting that the PSLV has failed twice in history due to different reasons.

Know More About Eos09

- The EOS09 or RISAT1B is an advanced earth imaging satellite of Indian origin furnished with a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR).
- The EOS09 skillfully navigates all weather conditions, capturing clear images of Earth day and night using its C band SAR.
- Having a high resolution of up to 1 meter, wide swath coverage, and five different imaging modes, the

EOS09 has a wide range of applications, including land use mapping, hydrology, disaster management, agriculture, forestry, and coastal security.

- With potential for dualuse, the EOS09 also has the capacity to aid in defense surveillance, contributing to monitoring military activity and maritime safety.
- The EOS09 was intended to be placed in a subsynchronous polar orbit to ensure reliable daily coverage.

Indian Yak Genomics and Its Implication

About Indian Yak Genomics

- Indian scientists for the first time have successfully sequenced the genome of an Indian Yak (Bos grunniens).
- The undertaking represents a milestone in the biomedical research and agriculture industry.
- The scientists utilised longread sequencing technology and sophisticated bioinformatics.

The Role of LongRead Sequencing and Bioinformatics

- Longread sequencing is a method that the scientists employed to identify a long series of DNA, spanning up to millions of base pairs. This differs from shortread sequencing that ordinarily deals only with 100–300 base pairs.
- As an interdisciplinary field, bioinformatics demonstrates the combined capabilities of biology, computer science, and mathematics, geared towards the analysis and interpretation of large biological datasets like DNA, RNA, and protein sequences.

Benefits of the Genomics Study

- The unique study paves the way for allele mining to occur, offering an improved understanding of scientific research and aiding local livestock management.
- Allele mining refers to the identification of genetic variations which are linked with desirable traits, such as disease resistance, drought tolerance, or high yield across or within species.

Geographical Distribution and Importance of Indian Yak

- Indian yaks predominantly reside in areas that exceed 7,000 feet. Notable habitats include Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh.
- In 2022, Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) officially recognised the Himalayan Yak as a 'food animal'. This paves the way for the yak to be used in food production or consumption.
- FSSAI's move is viewed as a measure to curb the dwindling population of the species while expanding the economic activities facilitated by yak rearing.
- The classification of yak as a 'food animal' allows it to be reared specifically for food production, granting economic stability to the yak breeders of these elevated regions.

MISCELLENEOUS

LIC Establishes Guinness World Record in Insurance Sales

Introduction and About the Achievement

- The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the largest public sector life insurer in India, has made history by setting a Guinness World Record.
- The record reflects the highest number of life insurance policies sold within a single day, achieved on 20th January 2025.
- LIC sold an impressive 588,107 life insurance policies across India through its large agent network in just 24 hours.

News Highlight and Recognition

- This landmark achievement was recognised by the Guinness World Records on 25th May 2025, marking a significant milestone for the Indian insurance sector.
- The recognition not only highlights LIC's dominance in India's financial landscape but also its deep rooted presence and influence.

Background and History of LIC

- LIC, a state run life insurance corporation, was established in 1956.
- It provides crucial financial protection and insurance services to millions of individuals across India.
- With the largest market share, policyholder base, and trust factor, LIC has been a consistent frontrunner in India's life insurance sector.

Record Breaking Performance and Leadership Initiative

- On 20th January 2025, LIC agents sold 588,107 policies, a record breaking feat achieved in 24 hours.
- A significant number of LIC agents, approximately 452,839, were involved in this national achievement.
- The record setting initiative was part of the "Mad Million Day" campaign spearheaded by LIC's CEO and MD Siddhartha Mohanty.
- Mohanty urged each LIC agent to issue at least one life insurance policy on the designated day, leading to the unbelievable achievement.

Significance of the Achievement

- The accomplishment showcases agent productivity, efficiency, and highlights LIC's organisational strength.
- It reaffirms the trust and confidence of the Indian public in LIC's services.
- The record stands as a testament to LIC's mission of ensuring financial security and insurance accessibility to the public.

LIC's Reaction and Response

- LIC expressed joy and gratitude for achieving this recognition, acknowledging the dedicated efforts of its agents, employees, and customers for making the record setting victory possible.
- The corporation highlighted this feat as an embodiment of teamwork and collective success.

Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: Life, Achievements and Contributions

Introduction and Background

- Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, born on 7 May 1861

in Kolkata, was the son of Debendranath Tagore, a wellknown Brahmo Samaj reformer.
- Tagore grew up in a culturally affluent household that fortified his inclination towards literature.
- The recent tribute given by the Prime Minister of India on his birth anniversary lauds his remarkable influence on India's cultural, literary, and educational sectors.

Education and Advocacy
- Tagore received his education at home that majorly emphasised Sanskrit, English, and Upanishadic texts.
- At the age of 17, he was sent to England, however, he did not complete his formal education.
- He later founded Santiniketan, advocating a holistic approach to education that promoted integrated learning.

Contributions to India's Freedom Movement
- Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore supported the 'Swadeshi Movement' through his writings and songs.
- He showed strong opposition to the British repressive governing policies, and as a mark of dissent, renounced his Knighthood in 1919 following the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.
- Despite ideological disparities with Mahatma Gandhi, he held him in deep admiration.

Literary Contributions
- Tagore is the notable author of over 50 volumes of poetry, 12 novels, numerous plays, short stories, and essays.
- His key writings include 'Gitanjali' which won the Nobel Prize in 1913, 'Gora', 'Ghare Baire', 'The Post Office', 'Raktakaravi'.
- Tagore also composed over 2,000 songs, including India's national anthem, 'Jana Gana Mana'.

Global Recognition and Influence
- Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore is the first nonEuropean laureate to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913.
- He played a significant role in forming bonds of understanding with world-renowned literary figures such as W.B. Yeats and Romain Rolland.

Philosophy and Vision
- Tagore promoted Universal Humanism, skillfully harmonising Eastern spiritual values with Western ideas of liberalism.
- He vehemently advocated for a harmonious relationship between man and nature, freedom in education, and the dignity of individuals.
- His belief system was antidogmatic and deeply rooted in the Upanishads.

World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day

Introduction and Overview
- World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is a significant humanitarian observance held annually on the 8th of May.
- It seeks to acknowledge and commemorate the critical humanitarian efforts of millions of volunteers globally who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to save lives and support those affected by disasters and crises.
- The day propounds the principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality, with focus on assisting and providing relief during emergencies, wars, and disasters.

Current Theme and Importance
- The theme for the year 2025 is "Keeping Humanity Alive".
- This theme underscores a strong commitment to humanitarian service at a time when societies worldwide grapple with escalating inequalities, health crises, and conflicts.

Historical Context
- The observance was officially established in 1948.
- It honors the birth of Henry Dunant, born on 8th May 1828, the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- Capitally, Dunant was also the first recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded in tandem with Frédéric Passy.
- Dunant, deeply disturbed by the distressing scenes of the Battle of Solferino in 1859, pushed for the establishment of humanitarian aid organizations. This advocacy led to the formation of the ICRC in 1863 and later the Geneva Conventions.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, home to over 80 million members, is a tour de force in international humanitarian work.
- The movement consists of the ICRC alongside 191 National Societies.
- They are known for their emblematic symbols of the red cross, red crescent, and the red crystal.
- They provide indispensable protection and assistance during conflicts and disasters.

Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS)
- The Indian Red Cross Society was established in 1920.
- It is key in providing disaster relief and healthcare services in India.
- The President of India presides over the society as its President while the Union Health Minister serves as the society's Chairman.

Overview of the Dongria Kondh Tribe

Introduction and Historical Background
- The Dongria Kondh are an indigenous tribal community, classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), hailing from the areas of southwestern Odisha, India.
- They are renowned for their environmental stewardship and their successful resistance against bauxite mining in the Niyamgiri hills.
- Recently, the community came into the limelight for brilliantly displaying their vibrant cultural identity during a festival held near their sacred Niyamgiri Hills.

Geography and Habitat
- Dongria Kondh Tribe dwell in the scattered settlements within the culturally rich and ecologically diverse Niyamgiri hill range.
- The hills are spread across the Rayagada and

Kalahandi districts of southwestern Odisha.
- The Niyamgiri hills, home to their holy spirit, Niyam Raja, bear a spiritual significance for the tribe and are considered sacred.

Language, Culture, and Traditions
- The tribe speaks Kui, an oral Dravidian language closely related to the Gondi language.
- Kui does not have a written script, though it is sometimes transcribed using the Odia script.
- The tribe is known for its distinct dress and ornamentation practices.
- Women of the tribe wear minimal attire, adorn themselves with metallic nose rings, tattoos, and long rows of earrings.
- Men wear colourful headgears and loincloths, often sporting traditional body tattoos.

Agriculture and Livelihoods
- The tribe maintains its sustenance by practising traditional farming methods known as 'podu' which involves shifting cultivation.
- They cultivate a variety of crops including millets, turmeric, pineapples, and other food crops.
- Their farming practices reflect a deeprooted understanding of their local ecology and natural resources.

Importance and Current State
- Dongria Kondh community's successful resistance against bauxite mining signifies their fearless commitment to environmental conservation.
- Their vibrant cultural identity and resilience have come under the spotlight, offering vital insight into tribal cultures and practices in India.
- The tribe's traditional knowledge and sustainable farming practices are of considerable relevance today, offering pathways for ecological sustainability and resilience.

Ayurveda Day Celebration and Insights

Introduction and Background on Ayurveda Day
- The Government of India has announced 23rd September as the official Ayurveda Day, as per Gazette notification.
- This national observance aims to celebrate and promote Ayurveda, India's ancient system of medicine, as a rational and comprehensive health tradition.

Date of Ayurveda Day
- The new date of celebration, 23rd September, will be annually observed as Ayurveda Day from 2025.
- The date coincides with the autumnal equinox, a day indicating balance, which is an essential aspect of Ayurvedic philosophy.

Objectives of Ayurveda Day
- The primary aim is to enhance awareness about Ayurveda as a preventive, sustainable healthcare system.
- It seeks to introduce Ayurveda into global health discussions as a sciencebased wellness methodology.
- A fixed calendar date facilitates improved planning and facilitates more participation.

About Ayurveda
- Ayurveda is an ancient Indian medicinal system rooted in the Vedas, specifically the Atharva Veda. This system is over 5000 years old.
- The term 'Ayurveda' is composed of "Ayu" (life) and "Veda" (knowledge), symbolising the "Science of Life".

Core Principles of Ayurveda
- Fundamental principles include preserving the health of the healthy (Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam) and healing the sickness of the ailing (Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam).
- Ayurveda accentuates a balance between body, mind, soul, and environment.
- The system advocates for natural healing through herbs, diet, lifestyle, and therapies.

Key Features of Ayurveda
- Ayurveda underscores preventive care over reactionary treatments, promoting mind and body harmony and seasonal routines.
- The system incorporates herbal medicines, detox therapies, yoga, and meditation.
- Ayurveda adopts a customised healthcare approach based on an individual's constitution (Prakriti).

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

Introduction and Overview
- The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is a fundamental constitutional body, established under Article 315 of the Indian Constitution.
- Its purpose is to conduct recruitment examinations for All India Services, Central Services, and other Group A & B positions.

Recent Development
- Former Defence Secretary and a retired IAS officer, Dr. Ajay Kumar, has been officially appointed as the new Chairman of the UPSC by the President of India.

Composition and Structure
- The UPSC is composed of a Chairman and several members.
- The structure and strength of the Commission are regulated by the President.
- Typically, the UPSC consists of 9 to 11 members.
- A minimum quota stipulates that at least 50% of these members should have a minimum of 10 years' experience in government service.

Appointment and Tenure
- The President of India appoints the Chairman and the other members of the UPSC under Article 316(1) of the Constitution.
- Conditions of service and tenure are also decided by the President.
- The tenure of appointment is 6 years or until the age of 65, whichever arrives first.

Removal Process
- The members of the UPSC can either resign their position, addressed to the President, or be removed from their position by the President.
- The grounds for removal include being adjudged insolvent, engaging in paid employment during the tenure, or being declared physically or mentally unfit

to serve.

- The members can also be removed on the grounds of misbehaviour (Article 317), with cases such as having a personal interest in government contracts or using their position to gain illicit benefits.
- In cases of alleged misbehaviour, the President refers the matter to the Supreme Court, and the Court's ruling is binding.
- Suspension of the member is allowed during the enquiry period.

The Shirui Lily Festival and its Significance

Introduction and about Shirui Lily Festival

- The Shirui Lily Festival, a major event in the state of Manipur, India, returns in 2025 after a twoyear break occasioned by ethnic conflict.
- The festival symbolises both a revival of cultural dynamics and a careful attempt to restore intercommunity movement and harmony.
- The event, which first took place in 2017, is one of Manipur's leading tourism occasions, with its counterpart being the Sangai Festival.
- It is a celebration of ecotourism, Tangkhul Naga culture, and conservation.

The Shirui Lily: The Cultural Emblem of Manipur

- The Shirui Lily (Lilium macklinae), the state flower of Manipur, is a rare bloom with a distinctive pinkishwhite colour found solely in the Shirui Hills of the Ukhrul district.
- Discovered in 1946 by Dr Frank Kingdon Ward, the flower was named in honour of his wife, Jean Macklin.
- Shirui Lily's uniqueness was further recognised in 1948 with the merit award from the Royal Horticultural Society.
- The flower blooms between the months of April and June, it grows to about a foot tall, and has a bellshaped blossom.

The Threats and Conservation Efforts

- The Shirui Lily is under threat and has been categorised as an endangered species.
- The factors contributing to its demise are climate change, loss of habitat and invasive species like the wild dwarf bamboo.
- The Festival, apart from being a cultural and musical celebration, also shines a spotlight on the urgent need for the conservation of the Shirui Lily.

Features of the Shirui Lily Festival

- The Shirui Lily Festival is much more than a celebration of a flower; it is a vibrant and dynamic display of Manipur's culture, tradition, music and a touchstone for communal harmony.
- The event features a range of activities including music concerts, cultural performances, and a series of community events to celebrate the diversity and unity of Manipur.
- The festival also helps in promoting the region's tourism sector as it draws in visitors from across the globe who come to witness and participate in the unique cultural festivities.

Press Council of India (PCI): An Overview

Introduction and Recent News

- The Press Council of India (PCI) has recently been in the news due to the nomination of three Members of Parliament by the Lok Sabha Speaker.

About and History of the PCI

- The PCI is a statutory, quasijudicial autonomous body, initially established on 16th November 1966, under the Indian Press Council Act, 1965.
- This was based on the recommendations of the First Press Commission, with the inaugural chairman being Justice J.R. Mudholkar, a Supreme Court judge at the time.
- The PCI faced a temporary setback during the Emergency (1975) in which it was abolished, only to be reconstituted in 1979 under the Press Council Act, 1978.

Objectives and Composition of the PCI

- The primary objective of the PCI is to maintain and improve news standards while preserving the freedom of the press in India.
- The PCI is made up of 29 members, consisting of 1 Chairman and 28 other members.
- The Chairman is conventionally a retired Supreme Court Judge, nominated by a committee.
- Of the 28 other members, there are 13 working journalists, 6 newspaper owners/managers, 1 news agency representative, 5 Members of Parliament and 3 experts.
- The members of the PCI have a term of 3 years.

Funding and Functions of the PCI

- The operations of PCI are funded through grantsinaid from the Central Government and graded fees collected from newspapers among other receipts.
- The PCI is responsible for framing a media code of conduct, ensuring ethical reporting, fostering public responsibility, monitoring restrictions on news flow, and overseeing foreign media assistance.
- It also explores the impact of foreign newspapers, handles media ownership concerns, promotes industry cooperation, and advises the Central Government on maintaining press freedom and accountability.

Powers, Limitations and Significance of the PCI

- The PCI holds the power to censure, warn, or admonish newspapers, agencies, editors, or journalists for breaches of journalistic ethics following a fair inquiry.
- Its decisions are final and not subject to appeal before a law court.
- Although PCI bears the power of civil courts and can conduct judicial proceedings, it does not have the power to enforce penalties for guideline violations and oversees print media only.
- It has no authority over electronic media, including radio, television, and internet platforms.

Key Notes and General Knowledge

- National Press Day is celebrated annually on 16th November, marking the founding of the Press Council of India.

Lakkundi Group of Monuments Proposed for UNESCO Tentative List

Introduction

- The Karnataka government and the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) are working on a proposal to include the ancient temples and monuments situated in Lakkundi, Gadag district, in the UNESCO Tentative List.

About UNESCO Tentative List

- The UNESCO Tentative List is a preliminary list where member countries can include sites they plan to nominate for consideration as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the future.

Location and Historical Background

- Lakkundi is located in the Gadag district of Karnataka
- This area dates back to the 10th to 12th century AD under the rule of the Western Chalukya / Kalyana Chalukyas.
- The region is known for its temple architecture, innovative water structures, and technological advances.

Significance of Lakkundi's Monuments in Cultural Exchange

- The monuments in Lakkundi are also examples of the Vesara style, which is a synthesis of Nagara, Dravida, and Bhumija styles.
- The architecture provides an insight into the historical developments of the time period, showcasing the intricacies of stepwell construction.

Major Monuments in Lakkundi

- The proposal includes several significant structures such as the Kashi Visvesvara Temple, the Manikesvara Temple, the Nanneswara Temple, Brahma Jinalaya dated to 1007 CE, and Musukina Bavi, a stepwell.

Architectural Highlights

- The Lakkundi monuments showcase Vesara style which is an amalgamation of Nagara and Dravida styles.
- The stepwells were not just water management structures but also had religious significance.
- The carvings, the foundation plan, and mandapa structures highlight the architectural prowess of the era.

The Proposal and Future Steps

- The proposal is currently under review by INTACH and the Karnataka Archaeological Department.
- After one year of being included in the Tentative List, the full nomination dossier will be sent to UNESCO for consideration.

Other UNESCO Tentative Sites in Karnataka

- Other prominent sites in Karnataka that have been proposed for inclusion in the UNESCO Tentative List are Badami, Aihole, Srirangapatna, Hire Benkal and the Deccan Sultanate Monuments.

Inauguration of India's First 3nm Semiconductor Design Hubs

Introduction and About

- India's Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurates first 3nm semiconductor design centres in Noida and Bengaluru.
- The hubs are set up by Renesas Electronics India, representing a major leap in the country's chip design capabilities.
- These centres align with India's vision of becoming a global semiconductor powerhouse under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat mission.

Current Highlights

- This inauguration marks a new frontier in semiconductor design for India.
- It not only highlights the country's growing prowess in advanced chip technology but also backs its efforts to build a robust, endtoend semiconductor ecosystem.
- This move also supports India's ambition to meet the rising global and domestic demand for electronics through selfreliance and innovation.

Key Objectives and Highlights

- Launch of these centres is a marked technological progress from earlier 5nm and 7nm designs.
- They are powered by Renesas Electronics India Pvt. Ltd., a leading global embedded semiconductor solutions provider.

Government's Semiconductor Push

- India's holistic approach includes chip design, fabrication, ATMP (Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging) and supply chain development.
- There has been a notable global recognition and support for India, with industry optimism evidenced by support from various major companies.
- Over 270+ institutions will receive semiconductor learning kits to foster handson learning and skill development.

Strategic Importance

- These hubs align with India's strategic interests and IndoJapan cooperation.
- Initiative focuses on building a selfreliant chip ecosystem, supporting manufacturing in several sectors such as smartphones, medical devices, automobiles, defence, and more.

Renesas' Role and Vision

- Renesas has a global expertise in embedded systems and systemlevel innovation and plans to expand design capabilities in India.
- They intend to form partnerships with academia and startups in India through schemes like Design Linked Incentive (DLI) and Chips to Startup (C2S).

Operation Olivia and Protection of Olive Ridley Turtles

Introduction to Operation Olivia

- Indian Coast Guard's annual mission, Operation Olivia, is a significant undertaking designed to ensure the protection of Olive Ridley turtles along the Odisha coast in India.
- The initiative is noteworthy for having recently

safeguarded over 6.98 lakh Olive Ridley turtles nesting near the mouth of the Rushikulya River in Odisha.

Origins and Aims of Operation Olivia

- Operation Olivia was first commenced in the early 1980s to safeguard Olive Ridley turtles during their crucial breeding and nesting season.
- The mission's central purpose is to maintain secure nesting environments for these turtles, by curbing illegal trawling activities. Areas of particular focus include Gahirmatha Beach and its adjacent coastal region in Odisha.

About Olive Ridley Turtles

- Olive Ridley Turtles, demarcated scientifically as Lepidochelys olivacea, are the smallest sea turtle species according to the family Cheloniidae.
- They are distinguished by their olive or greyishgreen hue and a heartshaped shell or 'carapace'.
- Olive Ridley Turtles are omnivorous and are particularly known for their mass nesting routine termed 'arribada'.
- Nesting and Migration Patterns of Olive Ridley Turtles
- During an arribada, thousands of female turtles collectively nest and propagate their species.
- These migrations cover vast distances, up to 9,000km, traversing Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans.
- Notable nesting areas are found at Gahirmatha, Rushiku00lya and the mouth of the Devi River in Odisha, along with locations in the Andaman Islands.
- Threats to Olive Ridley Turtles and Their Protection Status
- These turtles face numerous perils including bycatch, poaching, loss of their natural habitats, plastic pollution, and the effects of climate change.
- Despite these threats, Olive Ridley Turtles are under legal protection such as the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 (Schedule 1), they are listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List, and are covered by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) in Appendix I.

Updated Length of India's Coastline

Introduction and Overview

- The Ministry of Home Affairs highlighted in its 202324 report an increase in India's coastline length.
- The update from 7,516.6 km to 11,099 km is not due to land gain but a result of better mapping precision.
- The change illustrates the coastline paradox, demonstrating how measurement precision can considerably alter the perceived size of geographic features.

Key Facts About India's New Coastline Length

- The previous length was recorded at 7,516.6 km based on the maps from the 1970s at a 1:4,500,000 scale.
- The revised length as of December 2024 is estimated at 11,098.8 km.
- The updated figures involve 11 coastal states and 2 UTs, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep, with Gujarat having the longest coastline among them, extending approximately 1,600 km.
- It should be stressed that no new land was added; the change did not result from any alteration in national borders or geological expansion.

Mapping Methodology

- The National Hydrographic Office (NHO) and the Survey of India conducted the measurement.
- The technology used for this task included 1:250,000 scale electronic navigation charts, GIS, LIDARGPS mapping, drone imaging and satellite altimetry.
- The reference line was the high water line from 2011 data, closing river mouths at standard inland points.
- Tidal creeks, estuaries, sandbars, and lowtide islands featured prominently in their mapping process.

Implications for India

- The expanded coastline has important repercussions for India, in areas ranging from security to disaster management, from economic zoning to infrastructure planning.
- Securitywise, a longer coastline requires more extensive surveillance and protection, necessitating a reevaluation of coastal policing and Navy deployment strategies.
- For disaster management, it becomes crucial for preparing for cyclones, tsunamis, and sealevel rises while also ensuring accuracy in coastal zone regulation mapping.
- The change may also affect the calculation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and allocation of fishing rights, potentially allowing coastal states to exploit the blue economy more effectively.
- Infrastructurewise, more accurate data will come in handy for planning ports, shipping lanes, and coastal tourism initiatives such as the Sagarmala project.

Significance

- The updated measurement of India's coastline length highlights the progress made in scientific cartography rather than territorial gain.
- It reinforces the importance of accurate data for making strategic decisions about coastal development, biodiversity protection, and climate resilience.
- Moreover, it reaffirms India's maritime identity and supports its aspirations to be a leading player in the Blue Economy.

Conclusion

- The revised coastline length of India is a product of advanced geospatial technologies, not a physical expansion of land.
- This shift not only reinforces the country's capacity to safeguard and develop its coastal regions sustainably but also illustrates the pivotal role of scientific advancements in reshaping our understanding of geography.

SPORTS

Khelo India Youth Games

Introduction and About

- The Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) is an annual national level multisport event that falls under the Khelo India scheme.
- Its establishment in 2018 aimed at identifying, nurturing, and promoting grassroots sporting talent among India's youth.
- The 7th edition of this esteemed event was recently inaugurated via virtual format by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Patna, marking a significant first for Bihar — hosting a multidiscipline national sporting event.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, which functions as the nodal ministry, ensures the smooth conduct of these games.
- Previous editions of the Youth Games have marked their presence in Delhi, Pune, Guwahati, Panchkula, Bhopal, ending on a high note in Chennai.

Main Goals

- The KIYG has set its eyes on some key objectives. Firstly, it aims to promote mass participation in sports, thereby instilling a sporting culture and encouraging healthy competition.
- Secondly, it looks to foster excellence amongst young athletes, providing them with the right platforms and opportunities to prepare for international sporting competitions.

Key Features and Recent Developments

- The targeted group for these games comprises youth athletes under 17 and 21 years of age.
- The KIYG offers accolades in 27 different sports disciplines. A noticeable addition to the latest edition of the games is Sepaktakraw.
- To keep up with the emerging digitalera trends, Esports has been introduced as a demonstration event.
- The winners of the event are awarded scholarships under the Khelo India Scheme, providing increased opportunities and support for their future sporting undertakings.

Recent Developments in Cricket

Disciplinary Actions in Kerala Cricket Association

- The Kerala Cricket Association (KCA) has suspended former India pacer S. Sreesanth for three years from all association-related cricketing activities due to his public criticism over player selection matters.
- Sreesanth, who is concurrently an owner of the Aries Kollam Sailors in the Kerala Cricket League (KCL), has caused the association to have concerns about franchise coowners conduct.

Significant Retirements from Test Cricket

- Indian cricketer Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, both highly successful players in their own rights, have announced their retirement from Test cricket.
- These decisions mark a significant shift in Indian cricket, necessitating a new leadership phase, with Shubman Gill anticipated taking the lead as the team prepares for the upcoming England Test series.

Alteration in Gender Policy for Women's Cricket in England

- The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has barred transgender women from participating in all formats of women's cricket following a UK Supreme Court ruling.
- This policy mirrors similar moves by other sports bodies, inciting debates over inclusivity versus fair competition.

Recent Suspension of IPL 2025

- The BCCI temporarily halted the IPL 2025 due to escalating political tensions between India and Pakistan, which raised security issues.
- The decision reiterates the influence of international conflicts over sports schedules, with player safety and logistic considerations dominating the crisis response of the BCCI.

Players of the Month and Other Accolades

- Bangladeshi player Mehidy Hasan Miraz has been crowned as the ICC Men's Player of the Month for April 2025 thanks to his outstanding performance against Zimbabwe.
- Joe Root made history on May 22, 2025, by becoming the fastest cricketer to reach 13,000 Test runs.

IPL 2025 Highlights

- Rohit Sharma, one of the most celebrated batters in the Indian Premier League (IPL), made an IPL record by becoming the first Indian to hit 300 sixes in the league.
- Commemorations in Mumbai Cricket Association
- On May 16, 2025, the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) acknowledged the significant contributions and careers of Rohit Sharma, Ajit Wadekar, and Sharad Pawar among others.
- A stand at Wankhede Stadium was named after Rohit Sharma, while the MCA Office Lounge was dedicated to Amol Kale, in recognition of their contributions to Indian cricket.

Financial Boost in the WTC Final 2025

- The ICC announced a record breaking cash prize totalling USD 3.6 million for the winners of the WTC Final 2025.
- This significant increase in the prize money highlights the ICC's efforts to maintain international interest in Test cricket and reward consistent performances.

Recent Developments in Badminton and Tennis Championships

Sudirman Cup 2025

- The Sudirman Cup, World Mixed Team Badminton Championships 2025, saw China take home the title for the 14th time.
- In a hardfought match against South Korea, China emerged victorious with a score of 31.
- The match was held in Xiamen, marking a significant event for the city.

- South Korean badminton player An Seyoung's unbeaten streak of 25 matches was a notable event in the championships.
- However, China's comprehensive prowess across all five disciplines prevailed, with Shi Yuqi, Feng Yanzhe, and Tan Ning in particular playing pivotal roles.
- China's dominance in the Badminton World Federation's premier team event continues with this latest win.

Italian Open 2025

- Carlos Alcaraz of Spain emerged the victor at the Italian Open 2025, winning his first title at this event.
- He defeated Jannik Sinner in straight sets, marking his 7th ATP Masters 1000 win.
- Alcaraz's tactical intelligence and mental resilience were particularly highlighted during the match.
- The win ended Sinner's notable 26match unbeaten run, further escalating the rivalry between the two.
- After this victory, Alcaraz is in a robust position for Roland Garros 2025, making him an extremely strong competitor on clay courts.

Importance and History

- Both these events, the Sudirman Cup and the Italian Open, hold significant weight in the world of professional badminton and tennis respectively.
- China has a long-established legacy in badminton, with this being their 14th Sudirman Cup title, demonstrating their consistency and dominance.
- Meanwhile, Alcaraz's victory in the Italian Open marks a turning point in his career, signifying his emergence as one of the leading names in tennis.
- These events not only shape the career trajectories of individual players, stakeholders but also influence the global sporting landscape.

Geography

- The Sudirman Cup 2025 took place in Xiamen, a city on China's southeast coast, enhancing the city's global profile.
- The Italian Open is held annually in Rome, Italy, entrenching the city's status as a crucial hub for global tennis events.
- The geographical location of these events adds a global appeal and enhances the diversity of each sport.
- Roland Garros, where Alcaraz is projected to excel, is located in Paris, France, further underlining the global spread of these sports.

Rise of India's 86th Grandmaster in Chess

Introduction and About

- Srihari LR, a promising 19yearold chess player from Chennai, India, has recently been officially declared India's 86th Grandmaster (GM).
- This new title was secured after his laudable performance at the Asian Individual Chess Championship which took place in AlAin, United Arab Emirates.
- Srihari is a product of the Chess Thulir Academy, under the training of GM Shyamsundar.

Srihari's Milestones

- Srihari has consistently shown steady progress in the field of chess, defeating toprated players and showing promise in India's chess talent pool.
- He has also played a pivotal role in representing India on the global stage by showcasing his impressive chess skills.

Recent Developments

- Srihari's achievement comes after nearly a year since the last Indian chess player was awarded the esteemed GM title.
- This achievement sheds light on India's steady paced progression in global chess, despite an interval of nearly a year.

General Knowledge on Indian Chess

- The awarding of the 86th GM title to Srihari LR not only enhances the reputation of the Chess Thulir Academy but also highlights the importance of rigorous training and the grooming of young chess talents in India.
- This accomplishment of the young chess wizard from Chennai further amplifies the strength and potential of India's talent in chess.
- The culture of Chess in India, with its historic roots dating back to the 6th century where it was known as chaturanga, continues to foster and produce worldclass chess players, making the nation a significant competitor in the global arena of chess.

Current Chess Scenario

- Srihari's achievement comes in light of India's continuous efforts to promote and encourage the sport of chess among the younger generation.
- This is evident from the increasing number of young Indian contenders for global chess championships, thereby marking India's steady and robust progress in the field of chess.

Archery & Shooting: The Ecstatic Achievement of Kanak Budhwar at the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025

Introduction and About Kanak Budhwar

- Kanak Budhwar is a 17 year old Indian shooter who has made her country proud by winning gold in the 10m air pistol event at the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 in Suhl, Germany.
- 455The young shooter defeated renowned European champion and Olympian, Anna Dulce, cementing her dominance in the field.
- Budhwar has also previously won medals at the prestigious Asian Championships and the Junior World Championships, marking her as one of the promising rising stars in international shooting.

The Journey and Hardships Faced by Kanak Budhwar

- The journey of this young athlete has been anything but easy. Initially, she struggled with being underweight. However, through perseverance, technical improvements, and relentless determination, she triumphed over this challenge.
- Her meteoric rise to international acclaim in the world

of shooting sports is also attributed to the unwavering support of her family and expert coaching received along her path.

Why the win is Significant and the Future of Kanak Budhwar's Career

- The victory of Kanak Budhwar in the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 holds immense significance for India. This achievement fortifies India's position in international shooting sports and raises the country's hopes for future sporting victories.
- This milestone win may also serve as motivation for Budhwar's Olympic dreams. Given her current performance and progress, the prospects of her representing and achieving in future Olympic games appears greatly plausible.

Historical and Geographic Context

- The prestigious ISSF Junior World Cup where Budhwar claimed gold, takes place annually and gathers the best young athletes from around the globe. Suhl, Germany, the city where the event was hosted in 2025, has been a frequent and popular venue for shooting sports events.

The Importance of Kanak Budhwar's Win

- Budhwar's victory holds immense importance on multiple levels. It is not only a personal triumph against physical and technical challenges, but also an inspiration to all aspiring young athletes who face difficulties.
- Notably, this achievement has the power to inspire and attract more young talents to shooting as a sport, thereby solidifying its growth and popularity. Furthermore, it could boost the morale and confidence of the Indian team in international shooting sports, potentially leading to even more victories in the future.

Recent Achievements and Announcements in World Athletics & Football

- 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup in Brazil
- FIFA has announced Brazil as the host nation for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup, with matches to be held across eight cities.
- Iconic stadiums that featured in the 2014 Men's World Cup, such as the renowned Maracanã in Rio de Janeiro, will host the games.
- The event, which will feature 32 teams, aims to promote women's football, stimulate Brazil's economy, and boost the country's international sports exposure.

Indian Achievements in Archery

- Indian archer Deepika Kumari won a bronze medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 in Shanghai.
- This success adds to India's growing medal count at the global event, notably in both recurve and compound archery classes.
- At the Archery World Cup 2025 held in Shanghai, India secured a total of seven medals, illustrative of India's global stature in archery.

Neeraj Chopra's Javelin Milestone

- Neeraj Chopra, India's Olympic champion, made history by exceeding the 90m mark with a 90.23m throw in javelin at the 2025 Doha Diamond League.
- Despite his monumental achievement, Chopra finished second to Germany's Julian Weber.

SAFF U19 Championship

- India won their second SAFF U19 Championship title by overcoming Bangladesh, demonstrating the country's growing strength in youth football.
- The championship match took place at the Golden Jubilee Stadium, Yupia, Arunachal Pradesh, on May 18, 2025.

The Retirement of Pepe Reina

- Spanish goalkeeper Pepe Reina has decided to retire after 25 years in professional football, marking the end of a successful and respected career.

Tottenham Hotspur's Historic Win in Europa League

- Tottenham Hotspur achieved a historical win in the 2025 UEFA Europa League Final against Manchester United.
- Following 17 trophyless years, this victory secures a spot for the Spurs in the next season's Champions League.

Napoli's 2024–25 Serie A Win

- Napoli secured the 2024–25 Serie A title with a pivotal victory over Cagliari, marking a significant point in their history.

FIBA Women's Asia Cup 2025 in China

- The FIBA Women's Asia Cup 2025 will take place in Shenzhen, China, from July 1320.
- The legendary FIBA Hall of Famer and national icon, Miao Lijie, will serve as the event ambassador, highlighting her remarkable career achievements.

Recent Developments in Sports Across India and Around the World

Khelo India Youth Games 2025 in Bihar

- The Khelo India Youth Games 2025 was held in Bihar, marking a substantial enhancement in the state's sports sector.
- Over 6,000 athletes participated in 27 disciplines, also including new sports like sepaktakraw and esports.
- The programme has fortified Bihar's sports infrastructure with 38 Khelo India Centres for training in various disciplines.

Miss World 2025 Sports Challenge Win by Miss Estonia

- Eliise Randmaa, Miss Estonia, won gold at the Miss World 2025 Sports Challenge in Hyderabad, ensuring her place in the top 40 quarterfinalists.
- The event involved 108 contestants in a range of sports, with a cultural exposition of Mallakhamb, yoga, and skating.
- The win marks Estonia's return to the Miss World scene after 25 years.

The Doping Case of Shivpal Singh

- Indian Olympian javelin thrower, Shivpal Singh, failed a second dope test and has been put under provisional suspension by NADA.
- A retest of his urine sample collected earlier tested positive for a prohibited substance.
- A second offence could result in an eigh tyear ban

under WADA and NADA rules.

Revival of Sports in Northeast India

- The Indian government is planning to rotate the annual Khelo India Northeast Games across the eight northeastern states.
- The initiative aims to enhance regional sports infrastructure, promote traditional games, and discover young talent.
- The move aligns with India's broader aims of a global sports presence, including bidding to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games and 2036 Olympics.

Kush Maini's Historic Formula 2 Win

- Kush Maini became the first Indian to win a Formula 2 race, a significant accomplishment at the Monaco Grand Prix Sprint Race.
- This win is seen as a gamechanger for Indian aspirations in motorsport.

World Record Set by Mahendra Gurjar at Nottwil Para Athletics

- Mahendra Gurjar set a world record in the men's javelin F42 category at the Nottwil World Para Athletics Grand Prix in Switzerland.
- This win is a testament to his talent and determination.

Ahmedabad to Host Asian Weightlifting Championships 2026

- Ahmedabad has been confirmed as the host for the 2026 Asian Weightlifting Championships by the Indian Weightlifting Federation.
- This will be the first Championship to follow the new weight categories set by the international Weightlifting Federation.
- The event was initially scheduled in Gandhinagar but was subsequently moved to Ahmedabad.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

IndiaAngola Relations and Overview of Angola

Introduction and Current Event

- The Prime Minister of India recently hosted the Angolan President, João Lourenço, in New Delhi to conduct bilateral talks.
- The discussions led to India offering a defence credit line of $200 million to Angola and propose the expansion of cooperation in infrastructure, defence, and space technology.
- This visit marks the significant moment of the 40year diplomatic relationship between India and Angola.

About Angola

- Angola is located in the southwestern region of Africa and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the west.
- The Capital city of Angola is Luanda, which is also one of the country's coastal ports.
- Angola shares boundaries with the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Namibia and also has coastline along the Atlantic Ocean.
- Angola also includes an exclave region, Cabinda, which is situated to the north of the main territory.

Geographical Features of Angola

- Angola is home to major plateaus such as the Bié Plateau, Huíla Plateau and the Malanje Highlands.
- The country's peak point is Mount Moco, which lies near Huambo.
- The major rivers in Angola include the Cuanza, Cunene and Cuango rivers.
- The southwest region of Angola forms part of the Namib Desert.
- The climate of Angola is tropical with distinct rainy and dry seasons due to the influence of the Benguela Current, which is a cold oceanic current.

Ethnic and Economic Significance of Angola

- Angola is an ethnically diverse country with several Bantuspeaking groups like the Ovimbundu, Kimbundu, and Bakongo.
- Angola plays a significant economic role as one of Africa's top oil producers, with abundant resources of diamonds, iron ore, copper, and gold.
- The northeastern region of Angola is renowned for its electric diamond deposits found in river gravels.

IndiaUK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Introduction and Background

- India and the UK have formalised their economic ties by signing the IndiaUK Free Trade Agreement (FTA).
- The agreement is marked as a substantial step between the 5th (India) and 6th (UK) largest economies in times of ongoing global trade volatility and tariff uncertainties.

Key Highlights of the IndiaUK FTA

- The UK stands as India's 4th largest export destination and reciprocally, India is the UK's 11th largest trading partner.
- The FTA is India's 16th and the UK's most important bilateral trade deal postBrexit.
- A significant stipulation of the FTA is that it grants zero duty access for 99% of Indian exports to the UK.
- Indian professionals, specifically in IT and healthcare, will enjoy enhanced labour mobility, with India obtaining 100 additional annual visas.
- The deal features a Double Contribution Convention Agreement ensuring that professionals in either country are not required to pay national insurance or social security contributions in both countries.

Overview of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)

- An FTA reduces or eliminates customs duties and trade barriers on goods traded between two or more nations.
- Unlike Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs), FTAs offer comprehensive tariff elimination on most goods, while PTAs only offer selective tariff concessions.

Impact of FTAs on India

- FTAs enable Indian exporters to access new markets on preferential terms, thus increasing trade volumes and competitiveness.
- The consistent inflow of foreign direct investments is facilitated by FTAs, which foster investor confidence

and regulatory certainty.
- By diversifying sourcing channels and securing vital inputs for strategic sectors, FTAs help India maintain a resilient supply chain.
- Through closer economic integration, FTAs enable India to collaborate on advanced technologies and futurefocused sectors.

Concerns Associated with India's FTAs

- While FTAs have been beneficial, they have also led to rising trade deficits, with import growth outpacing exports.
- The FTA utilisation rate in India is significantly lower compared to developed nations.
- Competition from partner countries in key industries due to innovation and cost advantages can pose a challenge for India.
- Despite decreased tariffs, nontariff barriers such as standards and technical measures continue to inhibit India's export access.
- Complex certification procedures under FTAs raise compliance costs for exporters and stricter intellectual property regimes conflict with India's domestic policies.

World Hydrogen Summit 2025 and Green Hydrogen Initiative

Introduction to World Hydrogen Summit 2025

- At the World Hydrogen Summit 2025, held in Rotterdam, Netherlands, India shared its plan to become a global hub for green hydrogen production.
- This projection is a part of the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, aiming to place India as a leader in renewable energy sources.

Understanding the Concept of Green Hydrogen (GH2)

- Green hydrogen is a renewable form of energy derived by the process of water electrolysis powered by sources like solar energy or biomass gasification.
- The breakdown of water into hydrogen and oxygen takes place, yielding hydrogen as the chief output.
- Green hydrogen is utilised in various fields including fuel cells in electric vehicles, industrial sectors such as fertilizer and refineries, and in the transportation system covering roads and railways.

India's Strategy for Promoting Green Hydrogen

- The National Green Hydrogen Mission is the pivotal policy crafted by India seeking to enhance the scale of green hydrogen.
- The mission proposes to establish an annual production capacity of 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.
- There are two primary phases associated with this mission. Phase I will span from 202223 to 202526 and Phase II will follow from 202627 to 202930.
- The Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme (GHCI) ensures the credibility and transparency of India's green hydrogen market.
- An exemption from mandatory Environmental Clearance for Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia plants allows faster project implementation.
- Three major ports—Kandla, Paradip, and Tuticorin—are selected for development as Green Hydrogen hubs by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW).
- India is also actively engaging with countries like Japan, Australia, and the UAE for technology transfers and investment opportunities in green hydrogen production.

The Importance of Hydrogen

- Hydrogen, being the lightest and the most abundant element in the universe, makes it an essential potential energy source.
- Hydrogenbased fuels could play a significant role in India's journey towards energy independence, decrease its dependence on fossil fuel imports, and provide a stable, local energy source from renewables.
- The production of green hydrogen from waste biomass can also generate supplemental income for farmers and local communities, contributing towards a sustainable economy.

MEETINGS AND SUMBITS

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

An Overview of UNFF

- The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is a functional commission that operates under the directive of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- The commission was established in the year 2000, courtesy of ECOSOC Resolution 2000/35.
- UNFF is situated in New York, United States, within the UN Headquarters.
- The key objective of UNFF is to propagate globally the management, conservation, and sustainable development of all types of forests.
- Besides, the UNFF works to strengthen longterm political commitment to forests and supports the implementation of several forestryrelated global protocols, including Agenda 21, Rio Forest Principles, and global forest goals.

The Functions and Operations of UNFF

- The UNFF oversees coordinate forest policy across all UN member states.
- The commission is tasked with the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (20172030).
- It encourages global cooperation to put a stop to deforestation and forest degradation.
- The commission organizes biennial sessions. In odd years, the sessions focus on technical exchange and implementation reviews, while even years dedicate to policy development and decisionmaking.

India's Participation in UNFF

- Recently, India has actively engaged in the UNFF (UNFF20) held at the UN Headquarters in New York.
- During the forum, India highlighted the country's commitment to Voluntary National Contributions

(VNCs) under the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030.

- India also reported that the country's forest and tree cover has increased substantially, to cover 25.17% of the geographical area.

Outcome of India's Participation at UNFF

- Significant national achievements related to sustainable forest management were shared, including:
- The successful restoration of Aravalli through the Green Wall Project.
- The rise in the country's mangrove cover by 7.86% over the last ten years.
- The afforestation of 1.55 lakh hectares under the Green India Mission.
- The plantation of 1.4 billion seedlings through the nationwide campaign Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam.

Rising North East Investors Summit 2025

Introduction

- The Rising North East Investors Summit 2025 has been inaugurated by the Prime Minister, which is aimed at promoting the North East Region (NER) as a fertile ground for investment.
- The goal is to position the region as a portal of opportunities for both local and international investors in a diverse range of industries.

Summit Overview

- The Summit focuses on key sectors such as Tourism & Hospitality, AgroFood Processing, Textiles, Handloom & Handicrafts, Healthcare, Education & Skills, IT & ITES, Infrastructure & Logistics, Energy, Entertainment & Sports.
- The vision for the North East strongly highlights the region's core role in achieving a Developed India.
- The acronym EAST stands for: Empower, Act, Strengthen and Transform, embodying the essence of the summit's objective.

Sectoral Opportunities and Infrastructure Development

- Investors are encouraged to explore investment opportunities in sectors such as Energy, Semiconductors, Ecotourism, Bamboo and bioeconomy.
- NER is deemed a complete tourism package, making it suitable for global conferences, destination weddings, and concerts.
- Massive investments have been initiated in infrastructure developments with projects like the Sela Tunnel (Arunachal Pradesh), Bhupen Hazarika Bridge (Assam), new highways, expansion of railways and airports, development of waterways on Brahmaputra and Barak rivers, the Northeast Gas Grid, and improved mobile connectivity.

About North Eastern Region (NER)

- The North Eastern Region consists of eight distinctive states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
- This region is culturally rich, housing more than 200 ethnic groups, each with unique languages, dialects and sociocultural identities.
- Despite covering only 7.97% of India's geographical area and hosting 3.78% of its population, the region is strategically important with a total of 5,484 km of international border with Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Bhutan and Nepal.

78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGC)

Introduction and About

- The 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGC) was conducted recently.
- The occasion witnessed the External Affairs Minister of India in a meeting with counterparts from Brazil, Bahrain, and South Africa.
- The session ran from 5th September to 23rd September 2023, hosted at New York City, United States.
- The highlevel General Debate of this session commenced on the 19th of September 2023.
- The theme of the event was "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and the sustainability for all."

Highlights of the Event

- The event showcased twelve high impact initiatives, led by UNsystem entities, designed to support Member States' efforts towards just development transitions and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) achievement. One noteworthy initiative was the Nature Driving Economic Transformation.
- The event was part of the SDG Action Weekend of the SDG Summit.
- A Highlevel Dialogue on Financing for Development was conducted. It provided a platform to follow up on the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda – a framework adopted in 2015 to fund sustainable development in line with economic, social, and environmental priorities.
- A Climate Ambition Summit took place aiming to speed up actions by governments, business, finance, local authorities and civil society, focusing on a renewableenergy based, climateresilient global economy.
- A Highlevel Meeting on Universal Health Coverage was held to accelerate progress towards achieving health for all. It underlined the importance of executing policies for strengthening future health systems based on the 2019 Political Declaration.
- Lastly, a Highlevel Meeting on Tuberculosis was organised to review the progress made towards the goals outlined in the 2018 Political Declaration, identifying gaps and solutions to end the tuberculosis epidemic by 2030.

SVAMITVA Scheme & World Bank Land Conference 2025 – Pioneering Initiatives in Land Governance

Overview of the SVAMITVA Scheme and World Bank

Land Conference 2025

- At the 2025 edition of the World Bank Land Conference, India highlighted its innovative efforts in land governance.
- Specifically, the SVAMITVA Scheme and the Gram Manchitra platform were presented during the plenary session devoted to exploring good practices and challenges in land tenure and governance reform.

Insights about the SVAMITVA Scheme

- SVAMITVA, an acronym for Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas, was put into motion by India's Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2020.
- This central sector scheme pursues the aim of providing legal ownership of residential properties in rural regions utilising drone and GIS technology.
- The scheme is primarily committed to creating a Record of Rights for owners of rural properties, with a particular emphasis on abadi areas, which are inhabited regions.
- By April 2025, the SVAMITVA Scheme had dispensed property cards to about 24.4 million households within 1.6 lakh villages, thus unleashing land value measuring approximately USD 1.162 trillion.

Introduction to the Gram Manchitra Platform

- Another initiative, the Gram Manchitra Platform, is a GISbased system crafted to bolster rural governance and planning.
- The platform amalgamates geospatial data with existing schemes, thereby offering visual insights that are crucial for effective decisionmaking at the grassroots level.

Understanding the World Bank Land Conference

- The World Bank Land Conference serves as an international forum centred on land governance.
- It brings various stakeholders together to share extensive research, tackle technical challenges, and encourage the adoption of the finest practices in the realm of land management.

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF20)

An Introduction to the United Nations Forum on Forests

- The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is a global platform established by the UN Economic and Social Council in 2000.
- Its main goal is to promote sustainable forest management and conservation across the globe.
- The forum holds technical discussions and policylevel dialogues on an annual and alternating basis at the UN Headquarters.
- All UN Member States, including India, and several specialised forestrelated agencies are part of the UNFF.

Role of India in the UNFF

- India, a founding member of the UNFF, actively shapes global forestrelated policy through its active participation.
- The Indian delegation regularly presents its progress in areas such as forest conservation and sustainable forest management at these forums.
- Recent reports show that the forest and tree cover in India has risen to 25.17% of the nation's entire geographic area.
- India remains committed to the Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs) under the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2017–2030.

Key National Initiatives by India

- A series of initiatives have been undertaken by India in relation to forest management and conservation.
- This includes the Aravalli Green Wall project, which focuses on land restoration.
- Notably, there has been a 7.86% rise in the country's mangrove cover over the last decade.
- Other initiatives include largescale afforestation under the Green India Mission, and the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' ('Plant4Mother') campaign that has resulted in the planting of 1.4 billion seedlings.

India's Global Forest Conservation Efforts

- India has extended an invitation to all UN Member States to join the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). This global platform, initiated by India, aims to safeguard the seven big cat species through research, knowledge exchange, and capacitybuilding.
- Studies on quantifying ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water provisioning, and biodiversity conservation are also being conducted, using tools like the System of EnvironmentalEconomic Accounting (SEEA) and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA).

Inclusive India Summit: A Leap Towards Empowering Persons with Disabilities

Introduction and Overview

- The Inclusive India Summit is a significant initiative organised by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), which falls under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE).
- This event was recently organised at the India International Centre in New Delhi, timed to coincide with Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD).
- The objective behind this summit is to promote inclusive development, digital accessibility, and empowerment of Divyangjan, a term used in India referring to persons with disabilities.

Organisers and Supporters

- The inclusive summit is not a standalone initiative. It has witnessed collaboration with the SBI Foundation and the National Association for the Blind Delhi.
- Moreover, this event also gained support from the Association of People with Disability and Mission Accessibility, further bolstering its cause.

Significance of the Event

- The Inclusive India Summit earmarks a profound shift towards empowering persons with disabilities in India.
- Through strategies, deliberations, and discussions, the summit aims at paving the way for a more inclusive

and accessible India.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)

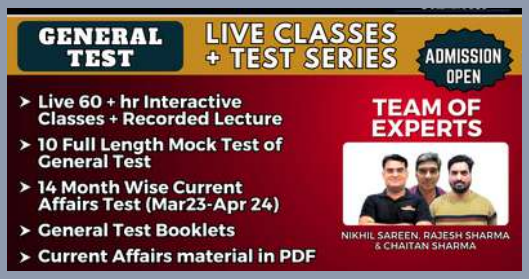
- Falling on the third Thursday of May each year, GAAD stands as a global initiative geared towards raising awareness about digital accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities.
- It is a day encouraging dialogue and action about digital inclusion, ensuring that people with disabilities also equally enjoy the benefits of the digital world.

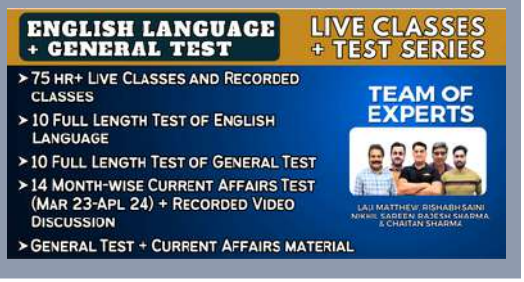
The Role of Digital Accessibility

- Digital accessibility is a key aspect; it refers to the ability of people with disabilities or impairments to engage independently with digital applications and content.
- By addressing digital accessibility, the summit and institutions involved hope to bridge the gap and ensure that India's digital growth is inclusive for everyone, regardless of their physical challenges.
- Thus, the Inclusive India Summit is an important stride towards recognising, understanding, and tackling the digital barriers faced by persons with disabilities. By holding deliberate conversations and planning focused actions, the summit aims at ensuring access and equality in the digital sphere for all.

LIVE CLASSES + TEST SERIES

AVAILABLE COURSES



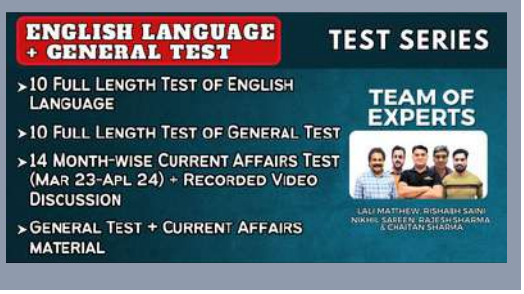


PREPARED BY

TEAM OF EXPERTS

TEST SERIES

AVAILABLE COURSES



EDU PREPARATOR

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SCAN CODE FOR COURSES

9990901901
9319737316